

PERSONAL

I should have known that it was going to be that kind of week after the incident when I went to talk to a group of teachers one evening. The meeting was scheduled in a community centre where several other events were taking place, and as I stood outside waiting to go in, a couple of sweet old ladies wandered up to me and asked if this was the room where the spiritualist meeting was being held.

Now I occasionally have to communicate with the invisible and the inaccessible, but the teachers I was about to address were a lively lot, and I realized that these innocent deceptions had no intention of gratuitously insulting an ageing teaching profession. Resisting the temptation to tell them that, if they wished to communicate with the departed, the education committee met on a Tuesday. I directed them to a room next door where their own meeting was assembling.

For the rest of the week I could not escape a series of contacts with spirits from another world, and the recurring topic was elitism. The argument about whether we should concentrate on the best, hoping the rest will be sucked in behind, is one that has been rehearsed through much of this century. The

tendency in recent years has been to try to devote resources to as many of the population as possible, and not merely favour the best endowed. This strategy comes under threat with cuts in the budget, when the temptation is to allow the achievements of the most able to mask the deficiencies of the under-performing majority.

I was, therefore, horrified to discover a most dramatic and significant shift of policy in one of our major national sports. The Football Association has established a formidable network of support for schoolboy, youth and club football, stretching across the entire country. There have been coaching courses for thousands of teachers, students or village club managers lasting from an hour or two for interest up to longer formal courses for coaching badges. It gave the lie to the commonly held notion that national sports bodies could not organize the proverbial all-party in a brewery, and was greatly admired by the rest of the world.

Now there has been a significant shift in policy at the Football Association away from the grassroots support of thousands of teachers and pupils and towards a new system of elitism. Part-time regional coaches have been



Ted Wragg

fired, and the remaining full-time coaches have been forced to spend more of their time in London working with national youth sides. A soccer school is to be established in Lilleshall where 60 promising 14 to 16-year-olds will live and train.

The die has been cast for a concentrated effort on a small elite in an attempt to produce a stronger national side, with a sharp reduction in support for the

mass of football-loving teachers, pupils and club players. I wrote to the FA to complain that it is a totally misguided move for youth football, and could anything be done about reversing the policy. The reply from the FA was that sweet FA could be done because it was too late.

My next contact with elitism was to read a conference account of a speech given by the junior minister Bob Dunn, who had the interesting assignment of trying to follow two previous incumbents, Rhodes Boyson and William Shelton. Bob Dunn (anagram: "Bun" Bond, the would-be secret agent who consumed too many carbohydrates) was described by one journalist after a press conference as "a boring version of Rhodes Boyson" and by another as "less impressive than William Shelton". A cruel lot these journalists, but since Will Sh., you know who, had as much impact on education as a grain of sand landing on the Pacific Ocean, I awaited No-Funn Dunn's maiden pronouncement with bated breath.

His conference address was a spirited defence of elitism and selection, but I find it hard to follow the logic of his argument. He has apparently

announced that he himself failed the 11-plus. It follows, therefore, that he believes the 11-plus was an accurate measure, he must accept that he was correctly diagnosed as not too bright. If, on the other hand, he is indeed very able, and feels it was an inaccurate procedure, then it is not very clever to seek to reintroduce it. Either way things do not look promising on the IQ front for Mr Dunn.

It was not until Sunday of this bizarre week of mine that sense returned. Mike Brearley, writing about my hero Geoffrey Boycott, Britain's finest batsman, described why he thought the great man was not a good team captain. After one bad day in the field, he recounted, Sir Geoffrey came off the pitch, lay down on a bench, put a towel over his face, and left Bob Willis to work out the batting order.

Brilliant, if you think about it. Forget management by objectives and all that managerialist nonsense. When all around you is chaos, rely on the good sense of your colleagues for a spontaneous solution to your problem. Just lie down on the floor and practice that new concept Management-With-A-Towel-Over-Your-Head. Thank Geoff.

DIARY

Paper chase

I'm no longer a passionate believer in the intrinsic worth of educational research, since becoming the daily harassed victim of it. One of the hazards of being the ex-chairman of the Select Committee is that I find myself deluged by a steady stream of post-graduate students from Brunel to Sussex who want to "test hypotheses" about the achievements of my committee. I suppose we asked for it, all that paper we turned out is mine to the education professoriate. I always cooperate, but always emerge amazed how little the thought-patterns induced by a training in sociology mesh with my sort of reality. It finally convinces me that I don't really want to end up, as a

A good read

For those who want something unsociological and simple to read about standards in education, I recommend, in preference to the mangled output of secret briefings, the excellent summary of HM Inspectorate's 1983 report which the National Union of Teachers have issued. It simply lists Sheila Brown's final judgement of the neglect of our schools by her political masters - books, buildings, teacher overload, special needs, the curriculum. The message is clear - that basic provision is at risk on a widespread scale.

Now Miss Browne is safely cloistered at Nymphen, I hope Mr Bolton will mark her trenchant style in his current efforts to produce the 1984 report - which I am sure will come out much earlier than his predecessor. There'll be no excuse of a general election to delay it this time.

The last rites?

To a wake at some plastic hotel in Bloomsbury, to attend the obsequies on adult education in our time. The service is conducted by Richard Hoggart and the former members of the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education. We are given a good dry sherry, a tolerable white wine and a hybrid green document containing the Order of Service entitled Six years of research, advice and encouragement: a record of progress in difficult times.

The first half is a fine eighteenth century tract, penned in the authentic Hoggart literacy style in praise of true adult education "without bossiness, divisiveness, competitiveness or self seeking" and laying into "popular journalists and populist councilors" who don't understand it. He sees our present society as "firing on only two cylinders" (the engine is presumably meant to be a Ford V8), and wants it transformed by adult education.

The second half is written in a somewhat different style and bears the

clinical, analytic marks of Naomi Sargent. It's a justification of ACACE's efforts during its six years of office, and a condemnation of the government for not even bothering to reply to their latest reports.

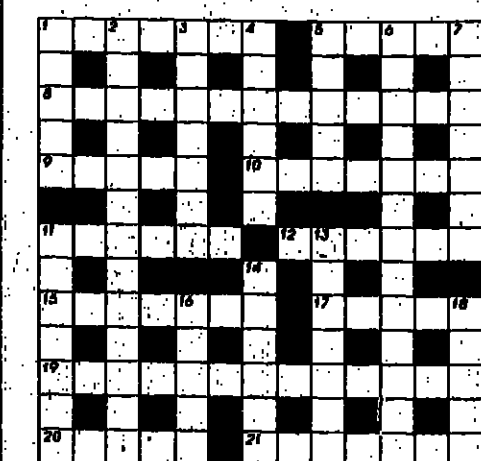
It ends up: "To continue, as the nation does, with policies which concentrate fully 90 per cent of educational resources on the initial education of children and young people reflects a habit and priorities derived from a settled society in settled employment within a settled framework of knowledge and skill which has long ceased to reflect the changing and anxious world we inhabit."

Peter Brooke, the minister in charge of these things, tells me that though Cyril Norwood (the inventor of late-day grammar schools and O level) was his actual godfather, Albert Mann-bridge was his spiritual one. I hope Peter has the courtesy to reply to these funeral obsequies, and remembers that in his dilemmas about how to do so, I shall be rooting for Albert.

With ACACE gone, the threat to adult education is now very real, especially from those grey mandarins plotting against it from the woodwork of the Treasury. In their book, my improving activity an adult over the age of 25 engages in should be reclassified from "education" to "recreation", charged for at full cost and made subject to VAT. It's happening already.

Christopher Price

No 123 CROSSWORD by Rufus



Down

- The border of Rome (3)
- Closely fought embryonic competition (6,7)
- New process examined in the mortuary (7)
- The most logical form of ascent (6)
- Government authority (5)
- A part of one sort of pedestrian crossing (8,5)
- They take no end of towels (7)
- A reply showing wit or spite perhaps (7)
- A complaint soon quieted (7)
- Quieten down people (6,7)
- Love only to upset a fool (5)
- Mother's taken on at the lodge (5)

Across

- Threats can seem ridiculous (7)
- A gross form that gives difficulties (5)
- It helps to drive one round the bend (8,5)
- Parts with some bread, we hear (5)
- Conscientious objection (7)
- Neglect about legs (6)
- Changes which should be made by wrongdoers (6)
- Careless a girl on the knee (7)
- Mass withdrawal on the Indian border (5)
- They filled up a form at the same time (6,7)
- Composition makes easy point (5)
- Panoramic sea-view from the Orient (7)



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CSE boards take big step towards open market

by Nick Wood

The CSE boards have made a significant move towards scrapping their cherished constitutional commitment to regionalism - the arrangement under which schools can enter candidates only for exams run by their local board.

Regionalism is eventually abandoned - as now seems increasingly likely - schools would have complete freedom to pick and choose among the new CSE O level/CSE exams which range from GCE and CSE boards are now developing throughout the country while Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, deliberates over whether to give official blessing to a single system at 16-plus.

Traditional CSE exams - which can be taken only by schools within a designated catchment area - would then be free to compete in the free market philosophy.

With the growing popularity of joint exams and the consequent decline in the number of CSE candidates, this move would assume only marginal importance.

At an annual conference in Torquay last week, the Standing Conference of Regional Examinations Boards agreed to set up a working party to examine the implications of allowing free competition between boards in the provision of joint GCE O level/CSE exams.

The boards also acknowledged that the national level they can no longer operate independently of the GCE boards. They decided to meet their O level colleagues to discuss "joint future strategies in the light of new developments".

The move towards "deregionalization" comes after pressure from the CSE boards - which accept entries from schools irrespective of their location, to extend this free market philosophy to the joint exams.

The GCE boards say the present arrangements are causing them "serious concern", because schools are not allowed to choose syllabuses and exams on strict educational merit.

To ensure that their candidates are eligible for both O level and CSE certification from just one exam - a major attraction of joint exams - schools are naturally opting for those offered by their local group.

Mr John Day, convenor of the GCE secretariats, has warned the CSE boards: "The principle of freedom of choice at 16-plus is likely to be exercised less and less often and will consequently wither and disappear with the common system of examining becoming almost uniformly regionally based."

The GCE boards were backed by Mr Bill Frewson, of the South East CSE board, who unsuccessfully urged the immediate end to regionalism.

He reminded the conference that when and if the 16-plus came, schools would have a free choice.

"However much we huddle inside our territories in developing our joint syllabuses, when the single system arrives, these joint syllabuses will be thrown open. If that is the case, what is the point now of creating artificial barriers to the free choice of school?"

However, other representatives at the conference pointed to the benefits of regionalism - greater participation by teachers in the design of syllabuses and exams and closer links between boards and schools - and said that it would be prudent to wait until Sir Keith had decided whether to go ahead with the 16-plus before making up their minds.

Conference report page 6

A private plan for adult education

by Diane Spencer

As a national approach to adult education for "motivated, fun-loving individuals" began in London this week, a private company, run by a private network of enterprises, has set up a working party to examine the implications of allowing free competition between boards in the provision of joint GCE O level/CSE exams.

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Conference report page 6

Little room at the top

The current top educational jobs - in the £25,000 to £35,000 bracket - are filling up fast. Eric Bolton has got that of the chief HMI: Bob Morris has returned, after a short spell running Lewisham for ILEA, to be top

of the HMI. The authority got its last one from the ranks of the HMI - a former teacher with the topical and appropriate name of Mr Michael Birchenough - and they were hoping to get the next one in the same way, but Sir Keith pinched Eric Bolton before they could. So they'll probably promote an incumbent.

I hope he or she turns out to be a brave soul, because these top jobs are proving crucial in the present chill, totalitarian atmosphere. Not that I'm expecting my old friend Bob Morris to reappear in the guise of Sir William Alexander of old, as a public champion of local autonomy (though there are those in the world of education who wanted Sir William out and are now wishing him back) but it would be nice to think that he will stand up to the corporate managers - both the old

ones in the AMA and the new ones in the DES who seem to think that they can run local authorities from Elizabeth House.

In the recent White Paper, we are promised three years of direct rule for local education.

It seems that at the confidential press briefing on how they were going to tame ILEA (to which they undoubtedly failed to invite me) Mr Walter Ulrich, the DES deputy secretary and expert in these matters, was not much more informative than he was when trying to explain the working of the 1944 Education Act to the Select Committee two years ago.

When the new ILEA collapses in chaos and when Walter is asked to take over as Commissioner, I advise him to decline the job. There are only five people who fully understand how ILEA works and none of them would dream of telling Walter. If he, or any of his fellow functionaries took up the job, they'd be inviting an early nervous breakdown.

Strictly off the record . . . of course

Since I wasn't invited to the confidential briefing about standards at the Polytechnic of North London either, I am unable to report what Eric Bolton, the DES's new Senior Chief Inspector and his sundry assistants said about it. But I do, in principle, think it unwise for inspectors to get mixed up in this business of unattributable brief-



Stuart Sexton

ings. They should write their reports, publish them and leave the titillating to Mr Oliver Letwin and Mr Stuart Sexton, their ministers' political placemen, who are far more adept at the art and whose educational credentials my learned colleagues from the Education Correspondents Group are more competent to judge.

Indeed Mr Bolton and his colleagues should take their cue from the tough and principled line being taken by



Ken Livingstone

the DES statisticians, who are standing up well both to Sir Keith and to Downing Street in their pleas for just a little thought before bestowing upon the noble Baroness Cox even more public money with which to "research" comprehensive education. It doesn't really help the Government's case against Ken Livingstone's alleged proclivity towards his political friends. If the Prime Minister insists on dispensing such generous hand-outs to hers,

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The missing link in policy-making

It is now some 18 months since Sir Keith Joseph announced his decision to scrap the Schools Council and replace it with separate bodies for examinations and curriculum. Moving with none of the speed which the importance of the matters in question might have been thought to demand, Sir Keith has inched his way forward.

For reasons which have never been clearly explained, it took the best part of a year to set up the examination council, which was given ostentatious priority over the curriculum body. But it is now operating under the chairmanship of Sir Wilfred Cockcroft and hopes to send Sir Keith its formal views on the feasibility of the proposed single system of 16-plus examinations early in the New Year. As Sir Wilfred indicated in an interview (page 8), this will entail reaching agreement on the degree of differentiation needed – how many common or separate papers will be required to accommodate the range of ability – and the resources which will have to be provided to do the job properly, as well as advising on the tortured prose which sets out the examination criteria in the main subject areas.

One of the examination council's tasks is to get Sir Keith off one or two of the hooks on which he has so needlessly impaled himself – as, for instance, when he chose to adjudge the physicists not to trouble their weary heads with the social context of science.

Sir Wilfred clearly leans to the view of those who believe that a form of words can be found which saves Sir Keith's face while allowing teachers to do justice to the wider social impact of science and technology. Whether it is any part of the examination council's job to save Sir Keith's ideological face is another matter. This will be one of Sir Wilfred's early tasks, does he see his

al instrument for carrying out the policy of ministers, or as one which is prepared to accept a wider allegiance to the whole educational enterprise and preserve its independent integrity?

It is plain that what the DES would like is to replace the Schools Council with two technical bodies. One of these is an examination council which will attend closely to the interesting and complex questions about examination technique, standards and administration, which are the concern of the examining bodies, and coordinate national examination policy as determined by the Secretary of State.

The decision to separate examinations from curriculum development implies that it is not a central part of the examination council's job to consider the content which will form the substance of the examination syllabuses, except in so far as it becomes involved in reconciling conflicting propositions put forward by examining boards or mediating curricular judgments handed down by the Secretary of State and his advisers.

The curriculum development committee, the second body, which is now in the last stages of gestation, is similarly conceived as a limited, technical body. Its job is to take hold of the decisions on curriculum policy which have been made elsewhere and consider what specific development activities are required to help the schools carry them out as well as possible. Where the Schools Council had been a body which could make its own agenda and establish its own priorities, the implicit assumption behind the curriculum development committee is that its priorities and its agenda will be made elsewhere – in the syllabus-building functions of the examinations council, in the publications of HM Inspectors and in the *obiter dicta* on

There is a strong, if limited, case to be made for such a body with such a role. There is a bipartisan desire to see the curriculum sorted out – to see with greater clarity what is meant to be on offer for all pupils. Where once it was an expression of the natural consensus to include in schools' articles of governments a clause making the curriculum the responsibility of the head, the post-1980 Act revisions now going through are continually taking that responsibility away and lodging it with the local education authority. The process will be speeded up by the curriculum circular now going out.

Each I.e.a. will have to establish its own curriculum framework and lay down the principles which heads and their staff will have to apply. And the logic points not simply to more I.e.a. control, as might at first appear, but to more DES control, because these local frameworks and principles will have to be made conformable to the over-arching curricular structure which the present Secretary of State, the grand centralizer *malgré lui*, is busily erecting.

Given for the first time the infrastructure for a national curriculum, it makes a lot of sense to take the further step of setting up a tame curriculum body. For the next year or two it will not have much money to spare for new development, but it could well be used to set up a development project on, say, translating Cockcroft into a series of mathematics courses or doing the same for any of the other major subject areas affected by the 16-plus examination exercise. It would not be theirs to reason why, but they could certainly be used to get on with the work.

The logic of this would point not to the increasing independence of the committee (which the local authority associations will be at pains to defend) but to a DES take-over at the appropriate time. The DES would feel much happier with it

inside the office like the Further Education Curriculum Development Unit (though that body's tendency to get out of line, and its high and therefore, to the DES threatening, reputation outside, has not given it an easy ride of late).

The question which arises is not about whether some greater measure of central coordination of the curriculum is needed: this question, practically speaking, has been answered. The consensus that it is. Some Ministers – of whom Sir Keith is one – feel unhappy about the idea of consensus: when there is general agreement, they feel something must be wrong, the soft-centre must have triumphed. But the time-scales of education demand sustained agreement and that means securing a broad, common base. This cannot be done just by building up the DES and supporting it with tame committees.

Larger issues of curriculum policy should be left to the DES alone – they demand, as the 1944 Education Act explicitly provided, the kind of collective consideration which only a body like the Central Advisory Council can provide. The Secretary of State is entitled to the considered advice such a body could give and, by the same token, the educational world is entitled to such a forum in which policy proposals can be tested in a broad discussion involving laymen and professionals alike.

Nobody could argue that the CAC was perfect, nor yet that its legal constitution should be beyond argument, but it served a valuable function, which is now even more necessary than it was during the 40 years and more when it was predecessor operated.

Neither Sir Keith nor the Department should be allowed to go unchallenged in forging an instrument of central, social, control, which is less scrupulous successors will not hesitate to use for their own political purposes.

COMMENT

A matter of taste

The "Network Campus" venture in "private" adult education may be an interesting sign of the times (page 1). The adult education provided by local authorities and voluntary bodies has come under ever increasing pressure, and this has forced up the prices charged to participants. Even so, there remains a wide price differential between the £8 for a two-hour evening "taster" course offered by Network Campus and the more modest fees levied by I.e.a.s for recreational courses.

As Arthur Stock, director of the National Institute for Adult Education, was quick to point out, this is neither a serious threat to the public sector nor dramatic vindication of the virtues of private education. It is an attempt to fill some middle class gap in a way acceptable to a fairly narrow segment of the potential market for adult education. In theory, at least, the organizers are trying to give people the chance to "taste" and make up their minds whether they want to commit themselves to a more extended course of study. If the approach is successful it might well increase the total demand for evening courses, in I.e.a. colleges as well as in private groups like those now being advertised.

What this probably reflects is not just an attempt to meet a supposed need on the part of students, but also the availability of many evening class teachers – people whose employment has been cut back with the curtailment of adult education generally. Having seen public sector adult education squeezed by the combination of higher fees and reduced local authority activity, their teachers may well be interested to see what the traffic will

bear, stripped of the old I.e.a. evening class income and given a more explicitly market orientation.

Of course, it just might take off and do for recreational evening classes what aerobics did for Keep Fit. Or it might not, in which case the mainstream in the evening institutes will shake their heads knowingly and relax.

Carry on excellence

The Social Science Research Council can carry on unmolested – provided the work it supports is "excellent". That was the counsel of perfection conveyed to the Council's new chairman, Sir Douglas Hague, in a letter from his friend Sir Keith Joseph last week. It was widely seen as an attempt to rebuild the confidence shattered by the unnecessary Rothschild inquiry (in fact, Lord Rothschild gave the Council a clean bill of health) and a £6m cut over three years.

Sir Keith made it clear that the Council's days in the doghouse were over. No further inquiry into its work was planned, he said, and he repeated his intention of giving it a period of stability after the run-down of funds up to 1985-86 (although, being Sir Keith, he added that he could give no guarantees).

The letter even appeared to recognize that the social sciences were academically respectable – with no exception made for sociology. "The interests and disciplines within the council's field are unquestionably important, inherently difficult and properly find a place in higher education, research and scholarship," Sir Keith wrote.

But, of course, the Education Secretary can rest secure in the knowledge that the council is in safe hands.



Sir Keith Joseph



Sir Douglas Hague

"Our initial conversations have shown that we share the conviction that your Council should encourage excellence regardless of current orthodoxies," his letter said. Spoken as one true free market man to another:

Jenkin sets out the sums

Last week's peremptory announcement of the rate support grant for 1984-85 (page 5) did little more than do the 'S' and turn the screws of the Government's earlier statements on spending targets and penalties for next year, and legal curbs thereafter. Having made it clear then that draconian targets would be severely prodded, and that he had a bit of Labour-controlled metropolitan authorities in mind for special treatment, Mr Patrick Jenkin, the Environment Secretary, did not even think it worth while giving the consultative council on local government finance a bite at the RSG dog's head (to mention thereof).

Among the fragments of new bad news that many authorities heard about second-hand was the decision to reduce the central government share of local spending; it has since been carefully leaked that support would have been chopped even more drastically if a fierce fight had not been put up by those guardians of local liberty, Mr Jenkin and Sir Keith Joseph.

Even more severe is the decision to impose steeply rising penalties as soon as a local authority goes 1 per cent over the target spending limit.

This year, the threshold point was 2 per cent. One of the most telling findings of a TES survey of local authority spending carried out in April was that many authorities were learning how to work the system by keeping overspending just below the penalty line. Even so, the budgeted overspend amounted to around £770m.

Making penalties bite at 1 per cent this time round is yet another attempt to get the overspend down but it will be no surprise if next spring many authorities are to be found budgeting just under the 1 per cent mark. The effect of this on educational

provision must vary widely across the country. In the largely Conservative counties, the tricks of creative accounting may contrive to uncover little pockets of cash from reserves, or local sales, that can be slipped into current expenditure and so avoid the work cutting.

Elsewhere, and especially in the inner cities where the battle with the DOE has raged longer and fiercer, there seems to be no alternative to big cuts or steep rate rises.

It is here that the parallel threat of legislation to cap the rate demands of high-spending councils in the following year (1985-86) has to be brought into consideration.

Such authorities – only a handful – must now decide whether to carry on regardless, pay a crippling price, and make themselves certain targets for rate-capping in 1985, or to start cutting back now.

It seems unlikely that many on the hit-list will go for the cautious approach since the RSG screw is being tightened so severely that drastic cuts in provision would be needed to work in a penalty altogether. But if they go for brinkmanship and raise the money through the rates this time round, next year's plunge over the cliff-edge could be even more devastating for the education service.

It may be a long and breathless wait to see if the combined cavalry of the County Councils and the House of Lords gallop to the rescue and sweep aside the rate-capping legislation.

...no comment

"The definition of a student is anyone studying full-time at a sixth form college or university or for professional qualifications. Proof will be required from the 'dilettante' who has taken a 'Game for a Dilettante' exhibition."

L.e.a.s in grants fight

by Biddy Passmore

The Government's Bill enabling the Education Secretary to make specific grants to councils for new initiatives was greeted with pledges of stiff opposition from the local authorities as it was published on Wednesday.

The chief complaint of both the Labour-controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities and the Tory-controlled Association of County Councils is that the scheme does not involve extra money. The Government will simply deduct up to 1/2 per cent from its spending plans for the local education service and pay out the amount in grants to selected councils. (This would have been some £46m in the current year.)

"At a time when local government spending is being further restricted and local authorities who exceed their targets are threatened with increasingly severe penalties, local authorities cannot support a suggestion that the Secretary of State should take money away from all local authorities to pay it back to some," Mr Philip Merridale, chairman of the ACC's education committee, said.

Mr Merridale and Mrs Nicole Harrison, chairman of the AMA's education committee, said the effect of the legislation would be to centralize more power in the Education Secretary's hands. "It's the Secretary of State deciding on education priorities," Mrs Harrison said.

The new grants, which will be payable from April 1985, are intended to encourage innovations and improvements, such as technical education and computer-aided learning. But final decisions on the areas to be covered will not be taken until after consultation with the local authorities. The so-called "support grants" will meet up to 70 per cent of the authority's approved expenditure on a project.

The Bill was given its first reading – a formality – in the Commons on Tuesday. The main debate on its contents will occur during the second reading in November.

SHA likely to recruit deputies

The Secondary Heads Association is preparing to admit deputy heads to its membership for the first time. The executive of the 3,000-strong association voted by 46 votes to 7 in favour of the move – which could potentially triple its membership – at the weekend. An extraordinary meeting of the association has been arranged for November 19 to decide on amending the association's rules to allow the change to go ahead.

Mr Peter Snape, the new general secretary of the association, said: "The membership has already been consulted and generally the feeling that deputy heads should have their own organization."

"It was also felt that the position of a deputy was an isolated one. Deputies have a management responsibility and as such are part of a partnership with their head teacher."

The SHA has been considering the question of whether deputies should be allowed to join for some time. The National Association of Schoolmasters' organization, does not admit deputies.

Mixed move

Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, has agreed that Teddington Secondary School, in the London borough of Richmond upon Thames, should become a mixed school from September 1984.

The borough's remaining girls' school, in Twickenham, will be re-

NEWS

Part-time jobs blamed for fall-off in O level passes

by Nick Wood

Saturday jobs are to blame for a "drastic" fall in O level exam passes at a comprehensive school, the headmaster has said.

Mr John Lilly, head of Ringwood School in Hampshire, which has 850 pupils aged 11 to 16, has written to all parents warning them that many children are devoting too much time to part-time jobs and neglecting their studies.

"For too many students the heavy demands of part-time work are affecting their real job which is their work in school. This is a serious problem," parents were told.

Mr Lilly also pointed out that the long hours worked by some youngsters, as many as 15 hours over a weekend, contravened the county's regulations on the employment of young people and meant they were not insured against possible accidents.

"I hate to think of what would happen if your child was injured, for example, working in the kitchen of a

local restaurant," his letter said. The headmaster's warning came after the school investigated part-time work among its pupils. Seven out of ten of the fifth-formers who took their O levels this summer were found to have a job, mostly in service industries such as pubs, hotels, restaurants and supermarkets, and two in 10 were working hours that broke the law.

The result he claimed, was a sudden drop in exam passes. In 1982, nearly one in three youngsters got five or more O levels, but this summer the proportion was down to one in five.

Mr Lilly explained he was mainly concerned about the upper 40 per cent of the ability range, though not the handful of very talented children. Around 1 in 10 fifth-formers had wrecked their prospects of good exam results by spending too long on part-time jobs, he said.

"A child who should have got seven or eight O levels was getting two – that's what I mean by drastic," he said.

Such children were now just "going through the motions" at school, Mr Lilly added. "For the first time ever in this school, five children did not bother to turn up for their exams. I have worked in urban areas where it is a big problem but it's never happened here before."

Exams seemed less important to young people now, he said, mainly because of the difficulties of getting a full-time job when they left school. Instead, they were more interested in the status and material possessions, such as motor cycles, that came with having money in their pockets.

"They say it's best to get any job – even a part-time one – because that could lead to a real job at 16. Others are not going on to further education and taking jobs way below their ability level."

Mr Roger Bettle, president of the town's chamber of trade, said he was unaware of any breach of the employment regulations.



John Lilly... children just going through the motions

"We don't think we are to blame and it seems a bit unfair of Mr Lilly to generalize about the traders," he said. But the matter would be raised at the chamber's next meeting and, if warranted, an investigation begun.

Statistician in research plea over exam results

by Philip Venning

Any government money for further research into exam results at comprehensive and selective schools would be better spent on studying the National Children's Bureau figures than those of the National Council for Educational Standards, a leading educational statistician said this week.

Professor Harvey Goldstein, of the London Institute of Education, said that it would be wrong for Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, to bow to pressure to reverse last week's decision to turn down an application from the NCEs for government funds to continue their controversial research.

In rejecting the application, Sir Keith called for a meeting between the authors of the NCEs study and their critics among government statisticians. Opponents of the NCEs believe that a

compromise could be reached which would enable Sir Keith to change his mind.

This week Professor Goldstein said that much of the statistical argument about the validity of the study which showed that in 1981 selective schools got better exam results than comprehensives missed the point.

The study had been widely criticized for using an unrepresentative sample (denied by the NCEs), but the important point was to compare the intake of schools with exam results at the end.

The NCEs did not have any figures for intake, while an earlier study by the National Children's Bureau did. This study concluded there were few major differences between comprehensive and selective school exam results.

Government to look at pupil profile views

The Government will soon be inviting views from local education authorities, teachers, industry, commerce and public service employers on the development of pupil profiles, it was announced this week.

Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, told MPs during Question Time that he would be sending out a draft statement of policy and principles for action in this field. His aim was to secure the more widespread use of records of achievement for school-leavers of all abilities, he said.

Sir Keith said he would be holding a national conference early next year on the selection of head teachers.

On teacher training, Mr Peter Brooke, minister responsible for higher education, reiterated the Government's view that it could not be committed to allocating a fixed and unchanging share of teacher training places to colleges supported by any particular denomination.

Mr Bob Dunn, junior minister for schools, said that provisional figures for the Assisted Places Scheme showed that intake this year had risen to 4,700, bringing the total number of children now taking part to some 13,000.

NUT conference snub to Sir Keith will continue

by Richard Garner

For the third year running leaders of the National Union of Teachers have decided against inviting a Government spokesman to address their annual conference next year.

A move to invite Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, to address their annual conference in Blackpool next Easter was defeated when it was discussed by the union's executive.

The tradition of having the Education Secretary address the annual conference was first broken when Sir Keith's predecessor, Mr Mark Carr, announced that he could not attend the Easter conference of the NUT and the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women

Teachers because he was visiting Mexico.

In his first year as Education Secretary, Sir Keith Joseph was invited to address the NUT conference – but this was withdrawn after a dispute over pay in the run-in to the conference season.

Teachers' leaders pinned part of the blame for the dispute on the government because it had recently abolished their anti-then statutory right to allow any salary dispute to go to arbitration if negotiations had failed to reach a conclusion.

Last year, the executive voted again not to invite Sir Keith as a protest against the education cuts. This decision has now been reaffirmed.

Most Oxford colleges agree on changes to reduce public school 'advantage'

Changes in Oxford University's admissions procedure which should increase the proportion of entrants from maintained schools now seem certain to go ahead. Agreement is expected from some three-quarters of the colleges.

The main change will be an end to the "seventh term" – that is, post-A level – special exam, which is thought to give an advantage to public school candidates. All candidates sitting the exam will now have to take it before their A levels.

Approval has also been won for making all offers, both conditional and those based on the entrance exam, at the same time, so that all candidates are considered together. Candidates are also to be allowed to opt for an

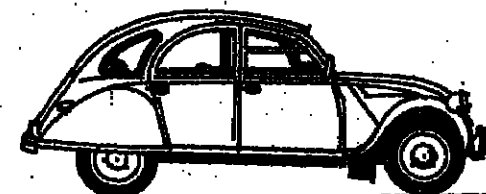
"open application" to the university, under which they would be considered for any college.

Thus, the main recommendations of the report drawn up by Sir Kenneth Dover, president of Corpus Christi College, have won the day.

Disagreement still remains, however, over whether the university should send out to candidates a table of colleges setting out their preferred method of entry, subject by subject. Sir Kenneth feels strongly that this would conflict with the open applications procedure.

Tutors in some subjects, notably modern languages, maths and classics, are also likely to insist on a written test for candidates.

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PLATFORM

Beyond the naughty child...

Can classroom misbehaviour be seen solely in terms of the pupil? David Steed, Jean Lawrence and Pamela Young believe a wider definition of disruption is needed taking into account that teachers can be inadequate too

No-one any longer thinks it strange for police to patrol the corridors of Bronx schools in New York; nor does the decision of a head of state in Nigeria to use non-commissioned personnel to stiffen discipline in schools excite more than a ripple of amused interest in the press.

Reporting misbehaviour in schools has become commonplace — but what are we to make of it? Are we reaping the fruits of a generation brought up on Spock, the Welfare State and progressivism? Are schools no longer able or willing to cope? To what extent do schools share responsibility for the apparent increase in indiscipline and violence at work, on the streets and on the football terraces?

Given the magnitude of the social problems associated with unemployment, poor housing and violence, to focus on the disruptive behaviour of children in schools might seem trivial. For haven't children always been naughty? And isn't the answer the same as it was 50 years ago — a taste of discipline?

Reliable answers seem hard to come by. For, on the one hand, you have the seriousness with which misbehaviour is viewed as a symptom of social malaise and the emotional response it evokes, especially in the teachers' associations. On the other, there is the continuing ignorance of its causes and significance and of effective means to control it.

As a result, and this is perhaps not surprising, it is whoever speaks loudest and most often who seems assured of an attentive audience in the national press. Nor is it surprising that we often appear to be impressed most by explanations which enable us to identify targets clearly and to apportion blame.

Indeed, most classroom conversations leave you in no doubt as to where the blame for disruption lies — in the child. For the child is disruptive, uncooperative, difficult, disturbed, aggressive, disobedient, awkward and bloody-minded. Every class has at least one of them who stands out; sometimes you seem to have a whole class full of them.



planation is cut short, where scapegoating becomes a convenient short cut that avoids the necessity and embarrassment for agonizing reappraisal and for painful and more far-reaching changes.

Such a view, in relation to misbehaviour in schools, would shift the centre of attention from the child to the situation. It would not deny that there are naughty children, nor that their problems reflect environmental or family circumstances. It would recognize, however, that the "disruptive incident" is not necessarily different in kind from other incidents which make up the normal life in the classroom.

Perhaps we should recognize that there are "naughty" or inadequate teachers as well as naughty and inadequate children. Perhaps we need to be less defensive and recognize the insensitivity of some teachers' demands and their independent role in generating misbehaviour and disruption of pupils.

There is much that we can learn from monitoring the incidents teachers consider disruptive. Looking for such patterns as: what times they occur; where they occur; whether they occur only with teachers of low competence; whether they increase at certain times of the year; and how far disciplinary procedures are used.

Information about such patterns can clearly be put to good use. For example, it may point to elements which are relatively more easy to manipulate than the child or his home background. And so the timetable could be rearranged to produce a break at times, say, in the afternoon when incidents are found to occur.

Monitoring of incidents of various kinds will show the school those points at which its resources can be best deployed and if carried out over a period of time, whether there has been any improvement or deterioration in the situation. It must be understood, though, that staff afraid of being labelled incompetent may conceal incidents from their colleagues. To counter this it may be useful if an outsider, with no information can be given in confidence, carries out the work, as we did in our recent study.

At the same time it is important to know why it is that teachers regard certain bits of misbehaviour as serious and worth reporting, while others will overlook them. Three factors seem important:

- Where the teacher perceives the incident as the latest in a series (that is it has happened before, often frequently);
- Where the teacher thinks that the pupil is "getting at" him personally and his misbehaviour is seen as intentional, malicious; and
- Where there is something special which acts as extra pressure on the teacher.

If such factors can be uncovered, if we could know how incidents develop, then we would have clues as to how we should be training teachers to cope with difficult youngsters.

When an incident occurs in a secondary school, the pupil's misbehaviour enters the official system which deals with it. The more incidents he clocks up, the higher up the punishment ladder he can go, through procedures of exclusion from the lesson, school detention, caning and eventual suspension from the school for longer or shorter periods of time.

The devastating fact is that once incidents are reported onwards, the pupil's case may escalate because several teachers have reported a relatively minor fracas with him and he is individual teachers who reported an incident may be unaware of the dimensions of the case to which their reporting contributed.

One alternative to sin bins, to large-scale rejection of children from the normal school environment, is to help teachers to cope inside the classroom. There are several avenues already being explored: the appointment of school social workers; the development of sanctuary units and primary stage nurture groups; and of pastoral care systems. But these focus on the child.

The focus of the discussion needs to shift and broaden to include both the disruptive and unruly child, the reacting teacher and the audience in front of whom the scene is enacted, the immediate context as well as the broader institutional definitions which shape it. Such an understanding is not simple; it does not offer immediate and clear-cut answers, nor is it easily arrived at. Meanwhile, we need far more emphasis on the systems which shape the child up the deviancy ladder and the school plays in locating him on it.

David Steed and Dr Lawrence are lecturers in the postgraduate department at Goldsmith's College, London University. Dr Young is a lecturer in the department of educational administration at the Institute of Education, London University.

NEWS

Closures double to 72 in year

The Education Secretary approved twice as many secondary school closures last year as the year before, the latest annual report on education in England shows. The number of closures approved in 1982 was 72, compared with 36 in 1981.

Pupil numbers in secondary schools also started to decline faster last year and primary numbers continued to fall. But the number of children in nursery schools and classes increased by around 12,500 to 234,000.

The teaching force continued to shrink, with a reduction last year from 420,000 to 414,600. This was smaller than last year when the number of teachers decreased by some 9,200 (2.14 per cent).

Because pupil numbers fell faster, the overall pupil-teacher ratio improved between January 1982 and January 1983 from 18.5 to 18.1 pupils per teacher.

Total spending on education

in England, and on universities and science in Britain, amounted to £11.8 billion in 1981-82, compared with £10.9 billion the year before. Education is the third largest consumer of public funds after health and social security and defence and accounts for about half the local authority spending.

Department of Education and Science annual report 1982, available from HMSO £5.50 net.

Manx proposal to be reviewed

The Isle of Man Board of Education has agreed to examine in greater detail proposed constitutional changes which would set up a Ministry of Education and Arts, responsible for education, the island's Sports Council, Arts Council, and the Manx Museum and National Trust.

Blast of the big spenders

As Whitehall trains its guns on Tory friend and Labour foe alike in its efforts to control council budgets, Biddy Passmore reports on the anguish felt in local government.



Patrick Jenkin... victory

haven't deserved to be penalized in this way for the irresponsibility of others."

In Whitehall, however, the rate support grant settlement was seen as something of a victory for Mr Jenkin and Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary. They fought off Treasury attempts to secure a drastic reduction in the proportion of local spending met through the grant (it will fall only slightly, from 52.8 to 52 per cent) and resisted a much fiercer penalty scheme which would have crippled any authority spending even slightly over target.



Philip Merridale... irony

English local authorities will get rate and specific grants totalling £11,870m next year, when their current spending is meant to be £20,345m. Of that, £19,720m is allocated to specific services, with almost exactly half (£9,796m) going to education. The remaining £625m is left unallocated, to allow for the inevitable overspending. Contrary to some reports, Sir Keith is not pressing his Cabinet colleagues for more money to help education authorities meet the cost of higher spending on rates at 16.

Hanging over next year's grant settlement is the

prospect of rate-capping the year after, when the Government plans to start limiting by law the amount selected high-spending councils can raise from the rates.

In education this poses the greatest threat to the Inner London Education Authority (see page 6), Sheffield and the London boroughs of Haringey, Brent and Newham. All have been given spending targets for next year which are at least 3 per cent lower in cash terms than their budgets for the current year. Newham for instance, stands to lose £25m in grant if it carries on spending at current levels.

Avon, a Labour-controlled county and another candidate for rate-capping, has already set its face firmly against cuts in services and given a warning that rates could rise by a third next April as a result of grant loss of some £50m.

Dr Robert Glendinning, chairman of the education committee, said: "To keep to the guidelines would mean scrapping all except the statutory service and I'm not sure we could do it even then". The county would have to close all nursery schools and classes and "decimate" further education, and the consequences for pupil-teacher ratios would be "absolutely hideous".

Dr Glendinning said he thought ratepayers would shoulder the burden because they were happy to have the service. But it was "deplorable" that the council was being put in this position. "I'd like to tell our own rate and then answer for it politically," he said.

But Tory shires which have done their utmost to contain spending also face a tough year. No fewer than 18 have been given a cash increase of less than 2½ per cent over this year's budget. And even the most generous target — 3 per cent over current budgets — will mean cuts in real terms.

In Surrey, whose target is 2.6 per cent over this year's budget, work is already well advanced on a cuts package totalling £3m which would mean the council was overspending by only 1 per cent (it is 1 per cent over this year). Nearly half would be achieved through cutting in line with falling rolls and the rest would come from savings on school meals, adult education, the youth service, special education, maintenance, school closures, cleaning and school transport.

But trouble is brewing with the unions on the proposed cuts in meals and cleaning, which would involve cutting holiday pay. And some of the cut in school transport would affect children in Catholic schools and may not be achievable.

Hampshire county council is likely to be between £10m and £20m over its target if it carries on spending at the current rate next year. But "creative accounting" may provide an alternative to major cuts in services. The county is lucky in having large capital reserves, mainly as a result of raising some £40m from selling off land in recent years, some of which could find their way into big maintenance projects. It may also decide to stop reducing its capital debt.

"It is ironic," Mr Merridale, chairman of the county's education committee said, "that Tory shires who support the Government policy of reducing public borrowing should themselves be put in a position where they have to contemplate reverting to borrowing themselves."

Warwickshire, too, will try to weather most of the storm next year through drawing on its reserves. It is set to spend nearly £10m more than its government target, but council leaders have drawn up plans showing what cutting back to the level would mean: the loss of some 400 teachers' jobs and a £1m cut in the school meals service instead, it plans cuts totalling £1.2m which will involve savings on areas like school meals and cleaning but will leave vital areas like staffing intact.

The county is very angry at its treatment and was sending a deputation to plead for relief to Mr William Waldegrave, junior environment minister, on Wednesday. Leaders estimate it can pay to maintain services through a combination of reserves and modest rate rises until 1986. After that, however, unless the Government lets up on the squeeze, it will either have to drastically or introduce huge rate increases.

Tackling curbs after the cuts

Richard Garner looks at the aftermath of Bradford's thwarted plans

Bradford's education spending plans were in turmoil this week. Opposition parties combined to reject a cuts package which would have shed up to 550 teacher's jobs, but then found that government spending curbs would have shed a further £5m for education. Labour and Alliance councillors and teachers' representatives on Bradford's education committee rejected a £7m package of cuts last Wednesday night. The package would have cut the council's £70m per cent rate rise. The full council will meet in two weeks to consider new plans.

In addition to the proposed £7m cuts, next year's budget, councillors were also told that a further £5m would have to be saved from this year's budget. This would mean cuts in supply cover for the end of the half-term holiday. The new supply would have schools to wait for three days for a supply teacher.

In the aftermath, education officials still looked for a way to implement the £2m saving — despite the fact that it provoked from the two largest unions, the National Union of Teachers and the Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Teachers, a national delegation from the NUT.

Mr Gilmour, education committee chairman, admitted the report was a "fairly horrific package" and said that councillors were working to produce a new package, which he hoped would "remove some of the more unpleasant aspects of the cuts", ie, the big loss of teaching posts.

However, on the day after the meeting, when details became known of the new rate support grant settlement for next year and the financial penalties which local authorities could incur, Mr Gilmour said that the measures would mean the loss of a further £7m for Bradford — about £5m of which would be attributable to the education budget.

dispute means that supply cover will remain the same until conciliation moves have taken place.

In addition to stopping the "no cover" threat by the NAS/UTW, Bradford also pre-empted opposition from the NUT. Mr Peter McBryde, divisional secretary, was confident that a ballot of its members over the half-term holiday would reveal "overwhelming support" for similar action.

Council officials drew up the cuts package after an earlier decision on the level of savings which each spending department had to make.

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"We are making representations to central government," he said, "because we are being penalized for having been prudent in previous years. We have been lobbying Ministers and they are coming up to Bradford. We are also preparing a case to be presented to Sir Keith Joseph (the Education Secretary)."

He added that the cuts package presented to last week's education committee had been necessary to avoid a 70 per cent rate rise in the rates precept next year.

are now facing a rise in their rolls. The package also envisaged cancelling all new nursery classes, delaying the opening of two nursery schools already built, reducing the repairs budget by £500,000 and increasing the cost of school meals from 50p to 55p.

Mr John Ryan, Labour's deputy education spokesman, who successfully moved the rejection of the package at last week's meeting, said: "We have been inundated with parents' letters about the cuts. They are grim and quite horrific."

Mr Nigel de Gruchy, deputy general secretary of the NAS/UTW, who led the delegation which met the authority last Thursday, said they had withdrawn the threat of industrial action following the council's acceptance of a collective dispute. "It is suspended pending deliberations," he added, "but — if there is a worsening of the pupil/teacher ratio — it would be revived."

Mr McBryde, NUT divisional secretary, who is also head of Branch 4, a special school, accused the authority of "already abrogating its responsibility to special education."

He said that children with special difficulties were entitled to education between the ages of two and five but the supply of new pupils at his school had dried up since January of this year. "Normally, I would have expected at least six referrals by now," he said, "but I suggest the authority is not telling parents of their rights."

The authority had asked the NUT if it would be prepared to join a delegation to go to Whitehall to protest at the inadequate funding arrangements by central government, but this had been turned down because the union did not believe in "robbing Peter to pay Paul" and felt the problem lay in "understanding of the entire education service."

The loss of teachers' jobs would have included the loss of 550 jobs in the authority's first school.

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NEWS

Reward plan divisive, says NUT

by Richard Garner

Local authority plans to reward good teachers are divisive and will only benefit a small number of super teachers, the National Union of Teachers says in a discussion paper.

The paper, which will be presented next week to the teachers' panel of the working party reviewing the salary structure, casts serious doubts on the proposals put forward by management representatives, claiming teachers who tackle "difficult" classes or non-academic areas of the curriculum will not benefit from them.

It says that teachers' leaders are already adamant that any attempt to assess qualified classroom teachers to decide who merits pay rises should not

The paper questions the need for formal assessment and suggests it should happen only if there is evidence of incompetence. Otherwise, it would be better to have an annual review during which teachers could evaluate their current teaching methods with other professionals.

It says that such a review would not carry a pass or fail element and "there would be no immediate financial reward or promotion associated with the review" — although clearly the process could help the teacher in promotional terms.

Management proposals are unlikely to be backed up by sufficient funds to reward more than a handful of teachers, the paper says. Indeed, the

type of quota system which would allow only a small number of teachers to progress rapidly up the professional grade — even though many more teachers could legitimately claim to be equally competent and efficient.

It questions how good classroom teachers would be assessed and argues that if the academic prowess of their pupils was the criteria, then "a system which tried to identify 'super teachers' would be likely to favour teachers who teach certain age groups, ability ranges and subject areas."

It points out that some teachers might become reluctant to take "difficult" classes in case this reduced their chances of accelerated progression through the pay scales.

would undoubtedly cause resentment among many teachers who feel their performance equals that of the "super teacher" but who fail to be identified as such," it says.

Salaries on the professional grade should generally be higher to reflect the professional expertise of those in the chalkface, the NUT argues. "More promoted posts are needed in schools," it concludes. "For example, if more promoted posts for curriculum responsibility were allocated, this would enhance the status and value of classroom teaching."

The paper is expected to be approved by the NUT's executive committee in a meeting before facing the teachers' panel.

Refugees face loss of grant

Hundreds of political refugees could be deprived of mandatory grants because the Government has failed to give them home student status, according to the World University Service.

The students affected are mainly Iranians who came to Britain in the late 1970s and applied for asylum after the 1979 revolution.

In that year the Government introduced "full cost fees" for overseas students. Refugees were shielded from the sudden increase by special regulations passed in 1980 giving them home student status and thus eligibility for lower fees and mandatory grants.

But, earlier this year, ministers introduced legislation tightening up residence qualifications. And subsequent regulations, according to WUS, discriminate between those who came to Britain as refugees and those who were already studying here when they were granted asylum.

The latter may now have to wait three years before qualifying for a grant because their status is left to the discretion of the I.E.A. or institution.

WUS was alerted to the change by the case of an Iranian who came to Britain in 1975 to take O and A levels followed by a TEC diploma in civil engineering. He has now been granted asylum but has been refused a grant by West Glamorgan to study for a civil engineering degree at the Polytechnic of Wales.

Adult enrolment up to 10 per cent

One in ten people in Derbyshire took adult education classes in the last academic year, the county's education authorities report this week.

Derbyshire has 72,302 students on vocational, leisure and remedial courses in the authority's 26 centres.

Rate-capping threat to 2,500 London jobs

by Biddy Passmore

Government plans to curb local spending could cause the loss of more than 2,500 teaching jobs in inner London, according to calculations made by the Inner London Education Authority.

The loss of jobs would be one implication of cutting back the ILEA budget to its Government target of £798m over two years, officials have estimated. And that could be what happens from 1985-86 when the amount the authority can demand from the boroughs is limited by law, and in 1986 when the ILEA is succeeded by a joint board controlled for three years by the Department of Education.

But ILEA's Labour leaders do not plan to start doing ministers' job for them. Of three spending options for 1984-85 sent out for public consultation last week, the stiffest envisages an overall cut of only £10m out of a budget of more than £900m.

The other two options, on which Londoners have six weeks to make their views known, would involve adding £10m and £20m respectively to next year's estimated budget of £910m-£925m, which is based on continuing current policies and allowing 5 per cent for inflation. (The current year's budget is £869m.)

"The authority does not accept that rate-capping is an inevitability," Mr Steve Bundred, chairman of ILEA's finance subcommittee, said. The Government's plans were "relevant matters for consideration although not a decision on the part of the authority."

The budget would be decided, after consultation, with reference to the needs of education in inner London.

Mr Bundred was choosing his words carefully. To avoid the charge that the ILEA is acting irresponsibly, and thus laying members open to legal action and a surcharge, it must take "all relevant factors" into account.

Although ILEA will be one of the authorities hardest hit by the Government's rate-capping plans, it is, ironically, certain to be untouched by the severe grant penalties for next year just announced by Mr Patrick Jenkin, the Environment Secretary (page 5). That is because its projected budget is so far above the Government's target that it will receive no grant at all for the third year running. Borough ratepayers pick up the whole bill for education in inner London, including an estimated £150m in lost grant.

But the boroughs themselves will suffer from the new grant penalties and will thus put heavy pressure on the ILEA to keep its spending down. The three options sent out for consultation last week would mean rises of between 3½ and 9 per cent in the 77p rate ILEA already demands from them.

The most generous of the three (option C) would permit the authority to spend an extra £20m for new developments next year such as non-advanced courses for unemployed teenagers and removing asbestos from school buildings. The last generous option (A) would permit extra spending of some £5m, more than matched by a saving of £15m.

The consultation document, of which 15,000 copies are to be circulated at a cost of £5,000, concedes that savings need to be made.

NUT voices opposition

by Richard Garner

A teachers' union is opposing an education authority's plans to make attendance on racism awareness courses compulsory for all newly-appointed teachers.

The plan has been put forward by councillors in Labour-controlled Brent as part of an attempt to combat racism in the classroom. But the Brent branch of the National Union of Teachers says it is against compulsory attendance.

Mr Malcolm Horne, a Brent teacher and executive member of the NUT for outer London, said: "We have made it clear we have no objection whatsoever to racism courses and we would urge our members to go on them. But we have made it clear that we are against altering our conditions of service to make attendance compulsory."

"What would happen if another

council of a different persuasion brought in courses that we were opposed to?"

Brent councillors have now decided to submit their proposals either to the next meeting of the council's joint consultative committee with teachers' unions or to a special working party on conditions of service.

Meanwhile, a similar argument is brewing within the Labour-led London Education Authority. The London branch of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers is accusing Mr Horne, ILEA education officer, of being "provocative" in sending a letter to schools saying that teachers will not be able to opt out of playing an active part in the authority's initiatives against racism and sexism.

Classes for unionists

A major initiative in adult education for trade union members has been launched by the National Union of Public Employees.

NUPE is pioneering the courses which give manual workers the chance to go on literacy courses in their lunch hours and on day release.

The scheme, financed as a pilot project originally by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, is now being sponsored by the Inner London Education Authority at a cost of £27,000 a year. It is based in London but NUPE is sending details of it to its regions in the hope that similar initiatives will start up.

The TUC's south-east region is now taking the London project under its umbrella in the hope that similar schemes can be mounted in other areas - in private industry as well as in the public sector.

NUPE found that a large percentage of its members who wanted to go on the courses had learned English as a second language.

Conflict in goals

Hampshire County Council has written to Mr Tom King, the Employer Secretary, complaining that Manager Services Commission proposals require more local authority staff time when the Department of the Environment is pressing for major reductions.

In their letter, Mr Frederick Egan, Wallis, the council leader, and Philip Merdiale, chairman of a education committee, say that Hampshire supports the policy of manpower, and had reduced staffs nearly 4,000 since 1979. But the authority had also taken a leading role in supporting the Youth Training Scheme, the expansion of the care service and further education colleges.

This had meant they were "at risk" being considered less positive or effective in pursuing staffing economies.

They urge Mr King to approach Patrick Jenkin, the Environment Secretary, to take MSC work into consideration when pressing for further staff cuts.

Team teaching antidote urged

More evidence of over-didactic teaching emerges from a report by the Inspectorate on advanced level courses in public administration at the Polytechnic of Wales.

Both the teaching style and the over-timetable of some courses leave students with too little opportunity to think and study for themselves, the report says. Staff make little attempt to vary their approach, even when students are bored. The report recommends more team teaching, both within and across disciplines.

The report also stresses that the staff concerned are "very adequately qualified", with a considerable range of experience: it is their teaching competence which needs development.

The Inspectorate says they were impressed with the good relationships between staff and students and report that students in many classes were complimentary about the positive and helpful attitudes of staff. But, in a minority of cases, lecturers were "too relaxed" about students' behaviour

and performance.

"A number of the full-time and a few part-time classes observed were marked by disturbing levels of unpunctuality and absenteeism, which appeared to be accepted by tutors, and the classes themselves, with little comment", the report says.

And the Inspectorate found examples of assignments on both full and part-time courses with "surprisingly low standards of presentation, understanding and writing". Some of these were marked carelessly, sometimes too generously.

The Inspectorate suggest that these lapses of control may be linked with the poor examination results and high wastage rates on some courses, such as a part-time BEC higher national certificate/diploma in public administration and police studies.

Copies of the report available from: The Education Department, Welsh Office, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF1 3NQ.

FE communication courses praised

Communication skills courses in further education colleges contribute to students' self-esteem and competence, a team of inspectors reported after visiting 23 colleges last autumn.

Students taking the City and Guilds Communications Skills Certificate and the Business Education Council People and Communication course were better motivated and had produced more work than fellow students who took unassessed courses of liberal and general studies, the report says.

But inspectors thought that work at lower levels made too few demands on some of the students, taking account of their increased motivation.

The report suggests that language specialists should be included in the team of communication teachers as they could influence the methods and materials used. Teachers should be allowed a "base room" suitably equipped for the assessment required by communication courses and timetables should allow teachers to meet formally to discuss effective methods and materials.

Colleges should also develop an overall language policy which could set

Far-flung placements criticized

A two-year social work course at Plymouth Polytechnic suffers from the fact that many of the placements are so far away and few students can afford a car on a grant, the Inspectorate says.

But unlike the highly critical report on sociology and social work teaching at North London Polytechnic published two weeks ago, this has few points of complaint.

Part of the difficulty arose because the course had over-recruited so that placements close to the polytechnic were quickly filled. Another factor was inadequate clerical support which meant that the placement tutor had to spend considerable time on basic clerical duties.

"When finance permits the appointment of one clerical officer with responsibility for all placements required by the faculty should be considered," the Inspectorate concludes.

Otherwise, it praises some of the teaching as examples of "very good practice being given by staff who were keen, knowledgeable and enthusiastic."

HMI reports

HMI reports are available free of charge from the Department of Education and Science, Publications Despatch Centre, Honey Pot Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ. Also available from I.E.A.s.

the communications skills classes in the context of the whole of a student's programme and which could increase the number of teachers in all departments who could contribute to the improvement of these skills, it says.

A survey of communication skills teaching in vocational courses in further education, HMI, DES, Honey Pot Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ

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PRIMARY

Home-from-home day-care system spreads its wings

by Philip Venning

An experimental day-care system for pre-school children and their parents, which aims to create a "home-from-home" atmosphere, has been so successful that another unit was opened yesterday.

The scheme, pioneered by Sunderland social services department and the Save the Children Fund, uses ordinary houses with a normal layout of rooms, furnished as a home might be. "Deliberately, no attempt was made to have all children's furniture or make the building into a form of 'nursery Noddyland'", says a report on the scheme, published to coincide with the opening of the fourth such centre.

"The atmosphere we wanted to create was one of a welcoming place, a place that was easy for both parents and children to come into and out of."

Parents were sometimes frightened by conventional nurseries and day centres, which are very child-oriented. The home from home system also encouraged parents by showing them that whatever they did in the centres they could also do in their own

homes. For children the centres, which are smaller than other pre-school arrangements, were less intimidating because they seemed more familiar. Responsibility for the children is shared by the parents with two nursery nurses, two parent helps, and the deputy project director in each house.

No domestic staff are employed, and everyone, children included, helps with cooking, cleaning and maintenance of the centre.

The day is divided into a morning and an afternoon session, each attended by eight children, and with a programme designed to teach speech, self-help, adaptive and physical skills.

Each unit takes families only from its own immediate community, but anyone is eligible. This means that the scheme is not limited to problem families. Each parent signs a written contract, the basis of which is to establish "the reason why parents want their children to attend the home from home unit and on this, and this alone, the allocation of time and other services are agreed. Therefore, if the

reason is one of simple socialization the time would be less than if it involved matrimonial breakdown, for example.

During the three years since the first unit opened 200 children have passed through the scheme, and many have made marked improvement in their language development. In addition, they have gained in confidence and in their ability to make firm relationships with adults and with other children.

For parents there had been a real improvement in their self-esteem, with greater commitment to their child's future development.

One of the main reasons for the project's success was that it had no expensive buildings, and could be moved on when demand changed. It offered a low-cost, high-quality solution which other local authorities should consider as a way of expanding their day care provision.

Home from Home obtainable from Save the Children Fund, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD. Free.



Anonymous borrowers from Brent public libraries have complained that Hergé's trusty boy reporter, Tintin, and a fellow cartoon hero Asterix the Gaul are both sexist. Mr John Clark, the borough's librarian, Mr John Clark, has ordered a close scrutiny of these children's comic book classics, (and they are likely to give offence and should be removed from the shelves. This was created in 1929, and Tintin books are published in 31 languages, including Serbo-Croatian, Malay, Esperanto, Welsh. The illustration comes from the Blue Lotus, a Tintin adventure.

Detention centres possible source of PE teachers

by Richard Garner

Youngsters in detention centres should be drafted in to schools to give physical education lessons to children of primary school age, a conference was told last week.

Dr Alec Dickson, president of Community Service Volunteers, the London-based community service which is celebrating its twenty-first anniversary this year, said it should press Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, "again and again" to allow such ideas to be given the go ahead "as they don't cost a penny."

Speaking at his organization's annual review day, he added: "Which section of your youth receive more physical education than any others - youngsters in our detention centres. What a marvellous chance we have to put to good use the physical training they receive."

He said that even if only 3 per cent could organize games for young children and become "recreational leaders" for six to ten-year-olds it could help them to step to the "right side of

Dr Dickson added that in the United States youngsters acted as guards on railway carriages. "We've got to confront these youngsters with situations and tasks which make use of their burgeoning machismo and give them a chance to use it in a positive sense."

The conference was also told of a new initiative planned by CSV to help youngsters facing expulsion from school. The organization is planning to take them on as volunteers in a community work to enable them to stay on at school.

Mrs Elizabeth Hoodless, CSV's director, told the conference that the organization was examining ways in which the Government's Youth Training Scheme could be used to provide youngsters with two years' training.

She said that CSV was negotiating with two firms - Pilkington's, the glass manufacturers in St Helens, Lancashire, and Whitbread's, the brewers of Nottingham - to take on young volunteers after their year's training.

Courses

West London Institute of Higher Education

CURRICULAR CONTINUITY

A three-day conference focusing on continuity of the curriculum over teacher stages. Part One of the CURRICULAR Continuity series will focus on the primary classroom. Right-hand pages will appear in a separate leaflet.

This conference should be of interest to all concerned with primary, middle and secondary education, particularly teachers.

16-17 November 1983

For further information and application forms, please telephone 0181 5161, extension 820 or write to Henry Spens, Oxford House, 800 St Margaret's Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW1 1PT.

New magazine

A colour poster a yard deep and two feet wide showing "The Adoration of the Shepherds" and a similar-sized song chart bearing the words of "The Holly and the Ivy" are included with the first issue of a magazine, *Hands Together*, for school assembly. It is published twice a term and is available only on subscription (£5 p.a.) from Scholes Publications, Westfield Road, Southern, Leamington Spa.

NEWS

Nick Wood reports from Torquay on the Standing Conference of the Regional Examinations Boards

SEC draws up a 16-plus agenda

The Secondary Examinations Council has mapped out the key issues it will need to resolve before advising on the feasibility of a common exam at 16-plus.

Top of the list are standards – in particular, the role of differentiated papers in the proposed new exams. The cost of switching from O levels and CSEs to a single exam for all 16-year-olds, the place of teacher assessment and the well-aided points of controversy in the physics, history and English draft criteria, arising from critical comments by Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, are also high on the Council's agenda after its first meeting.

Sir Wilfred Cockcroft revealed this to the TES after addressing the annual conference of the CSE boards in which he told them that differentiated papers were not a blanket solution to the

problem of ensuring that the new exams were a fair test for all candidates right across the ability range.

They would be needed in some subjects, but not in others. However, the Secretary of State would need to be convinced that methods of assessment in all subjects paid proper attention to the abilities of candidates, from the most able to the least.

Later, Sir Wilfred said that the maintenance of standards, an essential condition for the introduction of the new system, was intimately bound up with differentiation.

Sir Keith would not give the go-ahead unless he was sure that existing O level standards would be safeguarded – the Council's key task was to investigate this point and advise him accordingly.

Sir Wilfred told the conference that the SEC would be working closely with

the Joint Council for 16-plus National Criteria (JNC). It would seek its views on how the outstanding matters of controversy along the "critical path" towards the Council's final report to the Secretary of State could best be settled.

Referring later to the row over Sir Keith's desire to keep socio-economic matters out of science exams, he said Council members were divided over its significance. Some believed an important matter of principle was at stake, others that the issue had been blown up out of all proportion and that a compromise could readily be reached.

Dr Peter Andrews, joint chairman of the JNC, clashed publicly with Sir Wilfred over the fate of the criteria should Sir Keith decide to keep the dual system.

Dr Andrews said that the boards would revert to the status quo, de-

veloping their own pilot 16-plus exams in isolation from the criteria.

Sir Wilfred said that if the common system was rejected the criteria – "workable documents that now exist" – should be used to bring GCE and CSE syllabuses closer together.

Dr Andrews was generally "optimistic" about the prospects for a common system. The problems over physics and history would not prove "insuperable hurdles". He also found much to commend in Sir Keith's comments, notably his support for greater emphasis on speaking and listening skills in French syllabuses for less able pupils.

Dr Andrews urged the boards – CSE and GCE – to present a united front to government and to guard their independence. He said they enjoyed great public confidence – a fact that could give them political muscle in meeting

the growing trend towards intervention from the centre.

"One of our greatest attributes is our independence and our independent production of standards in education," Dr Andrews said.

But they also had their weaknesses, notably their "partisan" attitude which led some boards to concentrate on grade A candidates, while the "purists" extolled the merits of CSE mode three.

He also warned the boards that a combination of falling rolls and the end of double entries would cut the numbers of CSE candidates by a third over the next few years and would present them with a major financial problem.

"We won't be helped if the response is a cut-throat war run on strictly entrepreneurial lines with the devil take the hindmost."

Employers less critical of school-leavers' numeracy

The intense competition for jobs has led to a fall in the number of employers complaining about the mathematical skills of young people, a leading industrialist said this week.

"Employers are less worried about the mathematical ability of young people than they were in the mid-1970s," Dr Peter Wakely, former chairman and managing director of Associated Engineering Developments, said. "It could be there are young people on the dole today who in 1975 would have been upsetting one."

Nevertheless, there were no grounds for schools becoming complacent, he said. Big stores and engineering firms still found it hard to recruit numerate youngsters.

Dr Wakely was speaking at the launch of his booklet, *Blueprint for Numeracy*, an employer's guide to the Cockcroft report on the teaching of mathematics in schools, copies of which are being sent by the Department of Education to 25,000 employers, about half the national total.

He said he had produced the guide to show employers that the committee, of which he had been a member, had also intended to inform them of the report's findings and recommendations and to identify the steps they

should take to boost youngsters' mathematical attainment.

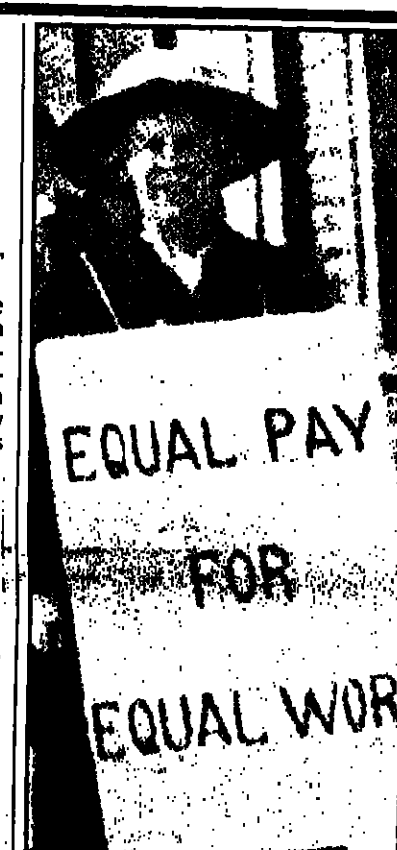
His guide reminds firms of the shortcomings of many of the selection tests they use in recruiting school-leavers. For instance, tests for would-be engineering apprentices focus on arithmetical skills and ignore equally important conceptual skills such as spatial awareness.

The guide urges firms to review their test procedures and to approach schools for help if they are found wanting. It also points out that in recent years, many managers were still ignorant of what happens in school, Dr Wakely added.

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Polys should form basis of technical education

by Philip Venning

Polytechnics should be taken out of the hands of local education authorities and made national centres of technical learning, Mr Walter Goldsmith, director general of the Institute of Directors, said on Monday.

He told an institute meeting in Glasgow that all levels of the education system had failed industry and young people. A technical education system was needed to allow Britain to compete on equal terms with the skilled workforces of its industrial competitors.

Universities should improve their links with business through such devices as science parks, but they should be primarily centres of academic excellence.

Polytechnics, by contrast, should concentrate on technical learning. Mr Goldsmith said: "Their confused syllabuses, often offering neither one thing nor the other, should be changed."

They had failed to produce a vocational education option because they lacked clear objectives.

Though education was more than just preparation for a job, to play down that role was a great disservice.

Mr Goldsmith added: "Unfortunately it is a sad fact of life that many pupils choose not to work in industry or commerce because of the ignorant prejudice of their teachers. They have been brainwashed by a misguided belief that industry equals grime, exploitation and industrial pollution, rather than the generation of wealth to support a caring society."

Survey pinpoints isolation of disabled

by Diane Spencer

Britain's 100,000 disabled schoolchildren face a bleak future, says a report published this week by the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR).

The report's findings are based on a survey of 2,000 teenagers with physical or sensory handicaps. More than 800 were interviewed, as were 19 specialist careers officers.

The study aimed to discover what the handicapped students could achieve, and to relate abilities to opportunities available.

It reveals that many local authorities do not even know how many disabled young people attend schools in their area, and even less is known about specific disabilities. Many disabled

youngsters in special schools have no contact with able-bodied children, they receive insufficient training in self-care and independence and there are not enough specialist careers officers.

Not only are the children isolated in school, but also in their social lives.

The report was commissioned in October, 1981 and is thought to be the largest study of its kind so far.

It recommends that: schools should provide intensive training for independent living; schools and colleges should give more information on careers in micro-technology and computing; further education colleges should consider how they can help handicapped students;

schools should arrange visits for students to sheltered and open employment to make them more aware of job options;

studies should be made of approaches adopted by special schools to prepare handicapped people for life after school; and

the issue of "significant living without work", first discussed in the Warnock report, should be the subject of seminars and working parties of teachers, voluntary workers and trade unionists.

Beyond the School Gate, Joan Bookis, RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB, £2.25. See School to Work – page 10

SPORT

All hands on deck – for press-ups

by Bert Lodge

PE jobs may seem routine at first sight, but here is one that is really going places.

It's aboard the SS *Uganda*. Famous for more than 20 years for carrying schoolchildren on study cruises around the Med, she now carries troops on the Ascension Island-Falklands run. And the Marine Society, the oldest maritime charity in the world, which provides books for ships and finds ships for schools to adopt, is concerned for the welfare of the *Uganda* crew, particularly their physical fitness.

So the society is looking for an expert in what is designated with a fine old-fashioned ring as "PT" to do a run or two aboard the 17,000 ton P and O troopship and work out a programme of activities which will leave the ship's 170 crew stepping ashore fitter than when they went aboard.

First, though, is only part of the job. The expert will also be expected to

write a report of the venture for the society and expand this into a consultative paper on how good health can be maintained aboard the 800 vessels still afloat in the Merchant Navy. Anybody who can think no further than a half-hour heave on the windlass need not apply.

Dr Ronald Hope, director of the Marine Society, said this week that the successful applicant would begin in January and be in the South Atlantic for up to four months. Burnham scale £200 a week plus free messing and cabin plus all out-of-pocket expenses is offered.

Anyone in a school post who is half-fondly to spring out of it will find the timing is unfortunate: the final day for handing in notices of leaving at Christmas is only three days away, long before even a short list will have been drawn up. The society plans to

take short-listed candidates down to Southampton late in November when the ship comes home.

Those who have qualified this year and who still have no job will not be troubled by the awkward timing. But Dr Hope has stressed the importance of the advisory report, and this may require more maturity than the newly-qualified can muster.

Mr Peter Lawson, secretary of the Central Council of Physical Recreation which is advising the society on the appointment, thinks a series of graded proficiency tests by which a crew member can measure his progress during a voyage or over a number of voyages may pull off-duty personnel into the gym or sports area.

Applicants should write to the council, enclosing a cv. Address: Mr Peter Lawson, General Secretary, CCPR, Francis House, Francis St, London, SW1.

NEWS

NOTICEBOARD

PEOPLE...

SCHOOL APPOINTMENT
Mr Dyer to be headmaster of Cabin Hill preparatory school, Belfast from January

COLLEGE APPOINTMENT
Colonel James Maskey to be director of studies, Broadwater College of Banking, London

UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS
Professor Newman-Davis, chairman of the Medical Research Council's neuroscience board, Professor P Morris, professor of surgery at Oxford University and Dr Timothy Carter, director of medical services in the Health and Safety Executive, to be members of the Medical Research Council.
Professor R Porter, professor of anatomy at Birkbeck College London, to be director of the Centre for Economic Policy Research, while retaining part-time university post.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENT
Miss D Greenwood to be assistant director of education for the Rochester diocesan board of education from January.

CONFERENCES...

NEXT WEEK
November 5
Walsley Research Group conference, Walsley School Centre, East Warwickshire
College of Further Education, Lower Whitton Road, Rugby from 10am.
Speakers: Cynthia Dawes, adviser for

mathematics; Philip Wellham, unit for Traveller Children, Carolyn Steadman, Schools Council; and Jim Campbell, Institute of Education, University of Warwick. Details from Mike Robinson, 7 Beechwood Avenue, Burbage, Hinckley, Leics LE10 2HD.

FORTHCOMING
November 15-17
Girls' Schools Association annual conference in Harrogate, Baroness Platt and Sir Keith Joseph to address the public sessions. Details from the Independent Schools Information Service, 56 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6AH. Tel 01 630 8795.

November 16
Association of Polytechnic Teachers one-day conference on *The Future of Diplomas in Higher Education* at the Polytechnic of Central London, Marylebone Road. Details from the Chief Executive, Association of Polytechnic Teachers, 27 Elphinstone Road, Southsea, Hants.

November 21-24
Castle Priory College will be running a creative activities workshop for teachers, nurses, care staff, therapists, helpers and parents working with handicapped groups and individuals. There will be a programme of art, craft and music activities. Details and application forms from the Principal, Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 0HE.

November 22
National Association of Head Teachers one-day conference on *The Spoken Word* at the Royal Commonwealth Society, Main speakers: Jack Dalglish, Christabel Burniston, and John Edwards. Details from Mrs J Higgins, Administrative Assistant, NAHT, Holly House, 6 Radcliffe Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1RG.



Call for peace studies adviser

by Richard Garner

Every local education authority should appoint an adviser to help schools promote peace education, says a paper to be presented to a conference on disarmament next month.

The paper, prepared by Teachers for Peace for the conference in London on November 12 and 13, urges i.e.s.s. to provide resources for in-service training and research into peace education. It also calls on them to appoint advisers with responsibility for helping teachers assess their teaching on peace education.

It also proposes setting up special working parties to look at specific subjects, syllabuses – particularly history and science – but including sports and careers advice.

Meanwhile, representatives from teachers' unions joined the mass Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament de-

monstration in London at the weekend. Several branches of the National Union of Teachers – including the Inner London Teachers' Association and teachers from Pimlico School – brought their banners to the demonstration (picture above). The college lecturers' union, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, was also represented.

However, more than 200 academics have signed an open letter, condemning the methods used by those campaigning for nuclear disarmament. It accuses CND of being selective in its use of facts.

Its signatories include Baroness Cox and Dr John Marks, of the Centre for Policy Studies, and a number of eminent names from the world of science, medicine and the law.

Turning on the teaching tap

Some pupils may leave school with no other skill than to their literacy and have even been worsened, Mr Peter Newman, chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality told a meeting last week.

Mr Newman, the former education secretary, urged education to a kettle being used under a running tap (the title of the flow of documents that come from the Department of Education, education authorities and teachers' organizations. Then consider the day in a school," he told

the College of Preceptors.

"All over the country, pupils are having the tap of instruction turned on and the results poured over them. The effect of all this is disappointing. Despite all the out-pourings, it is possible to go into classrooms and see far too little that has changed for the better since the 1930s.

"The world of education is full of people, from Secretaries of State to the newest recruit in the classroom, buying themselves at the tap before ensuring the elementary precaution of ensuring that the lid is removed from the kettle," he said.

EVENTS...

October 31
Opening, with inaugural lecture by Professor Geoffrey Dickens, of University of Sheffield Centre for Reformation Studies. The centre will present lectures, courses, exhibitions in the field of Reformation and Renaissance studies. Further details from Emeritus Professor James Atkinson at the centre.

November 3
Secondary Education for All in the 1980s: the Challenge to the Comprehensive School – Professor Brian Simon will give the Raymond King Memorial Lecture at 6.30pm in the Waterloo Room, the Royal Festival Hall. Admission free.

November 5
Jack Jones will deliver the Will Harvey Memorial Lecture, *Education for the Over-Fifties* at Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1 at 3pm. Admission free.

November 10
Sir Bernard Lovell will deliver an illustrated public lecture, *To See or to Perish*, a personal account of our modern view of the universe at 7.30pm at Hatfield Polytechnic. Admission by ticket only (£1).

October 28-November 20
Children's Art of the Commonwealth Textile Exhibition at the Commonwealth Institute Art Gallery, Kensington High Street, London W8. Open Monday-Friday, 10am-5.30pm. Sundays 2pm-5pm.

COMPETITIONS...

The Times
The Times Classroom Computer Competition no 7: entry form and details in The Times, October 25.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS...

Language Monthly, a new magazine for linguists and translators. Available on subscription from Praetorius Ltd, 30 Clarendon Street, Nottingham NG1 5HQ (£12 a year).

The Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health has produced an education pack, *Mental Illness – what's all about?* for 12 to 15-year-olds. The basic booklet for pupils includes definitions of mental health, illness and handicap; attitudes to mental illness, treatments and the different caring professions involved; and ways to help ourselves and others cope with difficult times. Teachers' notes give fuller background to these topics and information on further resources. Available from Beacon House, 84 University Street, Belfast BT7 1HE.

A practical guide to the conservation of wildlife in Britain's farmed countryside has been produced by Cheshire College of Agriculture. *The Wildlife and Landscape Management Plan Review 1976-1981* is useful with sixth-formers and in rural studies departments. Available at £4 from the Warden, Reseach Outdoor Education Centre, Cheshire College of Agriculture, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 6DF.

INFORMATION WANTED...

Music in the community
Help the Aged education department would like to contact teachers, schools or parents with experience of music in the community. They are particularly interested in projects involving infant classes and old people. Please contact Joanna Borna, Education Director, Help the Aged, 318 St Paul's Road, London N1.

Bristol finds fault in HMI

Bristol Polytechnic has hit back at a damning report on the work of its engineering department which was published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate in the summer (TES, August 5). It says the report, which was published 18 months after the inspection, was out of date and full of inaccuracies.

The report's chief criticisms were that the department had a "static and ageing" teaching force who taught in a boring way, did little of their own research and did not maintain up-to-date industrial contacts. Demand for part-time degree courses was inadequate, students' qualifications low and performance on the full-time degree course – technology with industrial studies – gave "cause for extreme alarm".

The inspectors also found the accommodation – on a site shared with Brunel Technical College – "unsatisfactory and wholly unsuitable for undergraduate teaching".

But the polytechnic's response points out that several new appointments have been made since the inspectors' visit, with an emphasis on recruitment from industry. Many of the new staff have research interests covering a wide range of topics, it says. Both intake and performance on the technology with industrial studies course had improved. The accommodation problem would be solved when the department moves into new, purpose-built buildings in 1985.

A simple test for music teachers and their students...

Questions:

1. Complete the following: "The sun it is rising to welcome the day, with a hey ho"
2. How do you find out about the latest educational developments in musical instruments?
3. How do you see a magnificent exhibition of early musical instruments and meet their makers?
4. What do you do to meet music and music book publishers in a relaxed, pleasant atmosphere?
5. How do you find the largest collection of damaged musical instruments in the world?
6. What is the best way of spending a day amongst musicians and music?
7. How best can you try out and compare the widest range of musical instruments – brass – woodwind – percussion – strings – pianos – classical guitars – electronic keyboards – meet the people who make and sell them?

The TES Guide to the YTS

The new Youth Training Scheme officially began operating in April 1983 but despite wide publicity most people in education and industry still have only a hazy idea of how it will work.

Who will get into the programme and what will it do for them? How will it affect schools and colleges? What is the real significance of the scheme for education, industry and, most important of all, the young themselves?

The TES Guide to the YTS attempts to sum up the facts and to set out how the scheme will actually work when, towards the end of this year, it comes into full operation.

The Guide is available in reprint form price 25p including postage within the UK.

Please direct your enquiries to:
Frances Goddard
The Times Supplements
Priory House, St John's Lane
London EC1M 1RX

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2. Come to the Fair
3. Come to the Fair
4. Come to the Fair
5. Come to the Fair
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7. Come to the Fair

OVERSEAS

Three tiers for a new path to top jobs

UNITED STATES

Peter David reports on the crisis for careers and curriculum

The end of summer in the United States coincided with the end of the recent spate of national reports calling for educational reform, leaving the politicians in Washington without a very clear idea of what to do next.

To fill the vacuum, Mr Terrell Bell, the Education Secretary, has called for a "national forum" on education to be staged in December. More than a thousand leading educational figures would attend the meeting in Indianapolis and discuss what should be done to follow up the recommendations in the spring report by the Presidential commission on national excellence.

Not to be outdone, Congress is mulling over an almost identical idea. Plans for a national "summit" meeting on education are moving through the Senate and the House of Representatives, despite complaints from the Reagan Administration that two major conferences are unnecessary.

But from the point of view of the schools themselves, what happens next at a national government level is not particularly important. While the reports published during the summer have created a national consensus about the crisis in education, most of the remedies suggested will have to be implemented by individual states and districts rather than by the Federal Government.

Many of the remedies — such as changes in the way teachers are paid and the way they are trained — are already being implemented. But there are already encouraging signs of progress from a large number of states.

In Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Utah, Illinois and Wisconsin, major reforms have been proposed. In Utah a commission on excellence staffed by parents, teachers and state education officials has drafted a proposal that would bring in a new career structure for teachers and strengthen the core curriculum.

The new career structure would create a three-tier ladder for teachers. First, new entrants to the profession would spend three years as probationary "apprentice teachers", with a base salary of about \$17,500 (£10,900) some \$4,000 more than the present average. A second tier of "professional teachers" would take on greater responsibilities and receive salaries of at least \$20,000. Finally a small number of "teacher leaders" picked by special talent-spotting committees, would be able to earn up to \$40,000.

Echoing a key recommendation in the recent Carnegie report on high schools, the Utah commission recommends freeing teachers from petty administrative tasks and giving them more time to concentrate on basic subjects.

In Wisconsin, a task force on teaching and teacher training has come up with almost identical recommendations. The committee would raise starting salaries from \$13,400 to \$20,000 and introduce a voluntary merit pay plan.

All Wisconsin teachers would be required to spend a probationary year before becoming professional teachers. Later, professional teachers with special competence could become "career teachers" or teacher specialists.

Other recommendations in the Wisconsin report include: extending the in-service teacher training; introducing stiffer requirements for intending teachers and devising financial incentives for bright school-leavers

interested in a teaching career.

In Arkansas, a commission chaired by the wife of the state governor is believed to be poised to issue a report calling for radical changes in the shape of the state's school districts and demanding, for the first time, that all children attend kindergarten.

The commission will also suggest imposing tougher requirements for high school graduation and extending the present compulsory education ages of 7 to 15 years to 6 to 16. Teachers' pay would be raised to an average of around \$18,000.

An educational task force in Indiana has told the governor that the state's present system, under which the state superintendent is an elected politician, should be replaced by a state board of education which will appoint a professional superintendent.

The task force also recommends raising the state's education spending, so that school districts can offer bonuses to good teachers and increase the school year from its present 175 days to 190 days by the end of the decade.

The state superintendent in Illinois has proposed a number of controversial reforms including lengthening the school day from five to seven hours and raising from 16 to 18 the age at which children can leave school without their parents' permission. Five hours a day would be earmarked for a core curriculum of maths, science, English, social studies and a foreign language.

In Florida, the state governor has had to postpone introduction of a controversial plan to raise the quality of teaching by making teachers take competency exams at intervals of 5-15 years. The plan has been opposed by teachers' unions and the plan and claim that it would be the first of its kind, and might discourage new entrants to teaching.

'Vive la différence' offer from the Left

FRANCE

Anne Corbett on state proposals for the private sector.

Out in the provinces the commune is often still fighting the hundred years educational war with the *cure*. The stories filter through of Don Camillo-like deals in which the Church gives the municipality land for the longed-for sports hall in return for a nice new school.

But although the troops may still be skirmishing, the generals are back in their tents, studying the terms of a peace treaty.

The French Government's proposals on private education have at last been made public, the fruit of endless discussions and 15 drafts since the eventual failure of M Alain Savary, Minister of Education, to reach agreement on the basis of a shorter, more precise document presented last December (TES January 14).

M Savary is asking the state and those representing the private sector under contract to agree in principle within a month to his three-year programme of negotiations and legislation. His proposals are based on three principles: equality of educational opportunity for pupils, freedom of conscience for teachers and pupils, and a choice of schooling for all. The aim would be to establish definitively a system of education which is "national but not uniform".

The Government would want by the end of the next school year to resolve what it calls management problems: the overlap in provision between the

state and private sector, the terms on which local authorities provide funding, the status of teachers and non-teaching staff and the place of religious teaching in the school timetable.

There is a second set of problems which would raise issues of principle: for example, procedures for naming the head of a private establishment, and working out how choice could operate.

A third set of problems — "the most delicate", said the statement — would define the relationship between state local authorities and establishments within the framework of the Government's decentralization programme: the status of teachers in the private sector who do not opt for tenure, and forms of public control.

These proposals are a far cry from the apparent simplicity of the Mitterrand election commitment to "a unified public and secular system of education". They even avoid the word that the Catholics most fear, "integration" (translated as nationalization).

But it is not clear that the French Government ever thought in the terms that their anti-clerical supporters are wishing on them — to cut off private schools, which are 90 per cent Catholic, from the state aid which most have had on generous terms since 1959.

It would have been difficult in practical terms. These schools take 10 per cent of the school population — more than two million of the 12 million total. It would have been difficult in terms of public opinion: 70 per cent favour the continued existence of an alternative to the state, the school under contract having successfully sold themselves, particularly since 1982, as the sector which cares about pupils' havens of moral values and also as educationally flexible.

But a strategy of isolation as opposed to negotiation would also have been contrary to the left-wing ideology which favours breaking the state mould in order to encourage more diversity and more individual initiative, and which looks to decentralization and greater institutional autonomy to provide a framework.

Whatever the outcome of the Savary proposals — and the list of failures is long — they deserve a place in the was and as an equally unprecedented initiative of the Left to end the school war and as an equally unprecedented conversion on the part of the French Government to educational diversity.

LETTERS

An all-consuming category in DES statistics

So I wonder whether fellow contributors to the compilation of DES statistics returns, notably Form 7d, have any concern as they post their single return of school leavers over the past academic year?

From my own school 24 case histories will be returned, of these five are currently engaged on Youth Training Scheme programmes. I was surprised to find no appropriate place on Form 7d in which to record the destination of these leavers, indeed, for unemployed leavers, on checking with an official, I was advised to include them all in the following category:

"If the leaver's destination is employment, apprenticeship, or any other known destination, not listed above, and no further full-time education envisaged before November 1984 please put X in this box. Please include those leavers known to be looking for employment."

At the very least, a valuable source of information about the extent of

unemployment among 16 to 19-year-olds and the take-up of YTS has been overlooked.

The chief concern of this form is to acquire information as to the qualifications and courses to be followed by students entering further and higher education. Here again, however, the form fails to take account of an increasing number of ex-students who fully intend improving their grade performance at A level in the hope of taking up university and polytechnic places in October 1984. They, too, are swallowed up in the category already indicated.

Perhaps those responsible do not wish to know the hard facts of unemployment, the take-up of YTS or the fate of 18-year-olds squeezed out of higher education places?

PATRICIA COLLINS
Glebe Villa
4 Glebe Street
Beeston
Nottingham

CDT for girls

So — in recent weeks we have seen major steps forward in the realization of equal opportunities for girls in CDT. A particular example of this has been the "blue book", *Equal Opportunities in Craft, Design and Technology*, published by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

The book is quite well presented and contains relevant information and practical suggestions. However, discrimination can take many forms, and certainly any secondary school which so arranges its curriculum that some pupils are deprived of CDT (perhaps in the third year) to attend extra language lessons (for example, are in my opinion guilty of practices of an equal magnitude.

George Hicks so rightly pointed out in his recent article, "Infant phenomenon" (TES, October 7), when he stated the importance of the contribution of CDT to the education of all pupils, irrespective of age, sex or ability. We have now established a working party of teachers to investigate equality of opportunity for all pupils in CDT.

JAN PEARSON
St Margaret's
Chesham
Buckinghamshire

Manpower model

Jack Cross (TES, October 14) described developments in Surrey in connection with monitoring of the curriculum.

Clearly it was a fair and balanced description of this project. However, I think it is necessary to comment on his paragraph in which he suggests that I could predict exact staffing reductions. This of course could not be the case. Such a situation would ignore the role of headteachers, their philosophical responsibility, their philosophy and philosophy of local needs.

I think that Mr Cross, in this paragraph, was referring to my discussion of the need for possible further development in using computerized curricular information that is the construction of a series of appropriate curriculum

models catering for various age ranges and sizes of schools. Such curriculum models, which of course must not be confused with model curricula, would demand precise staffing resource and could lead to "curriculum staffing" in which the pupil/teacher ratio is a product of the system rather than being its main determinant.

By relating the actual curricula in schools to the curriculum model, and by devising a new curriculum model that would "fit" any reduction in manpower, it would then be feasible to suggest those curriculum changes that might take place generally due to any reduction in teaching resource — a practice which I believe already exists in some local education authorities.

BILL DICKINSON
Staff inspector for secondary education,
Surrey County Council
Kingston upon Thames.

UCL goes Dutch

So, in his "Careers Diary" (TES, October 7), Brian Heap advises UCL candidates that courses in Dutch are being withdrawn at Bedford College London.

What he does not make clear is that these courses are now being taught at University College London.

As part of the widespread reorganization within the University of London, the staff of the department of Dutch at Bedford College have transferred to UCL. The BA course in Dutch language and literature at UCL is the only one of its kind in Britain and the college is accepting applications through the UCAS for 1984 entry.

N C F CLEWLEY
Information Officer
University College London
Gower Street, WC1E 6BT

THE BRITISH COUNCIL

International Specialist Courses

Teaching Practice and Assessment for ELT
25 March - 6 April 1984 in London

The course will address itself to issues concerning the place of teaching practice on initial or in-service training courses for teachers of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and the assessment and evaluation of this element. Emphasis will be placed not only on current practice in ESOL but also on recent developments and research in general and foreign language programmes of teacher training in Britain.

The Director of Studies will be Ken Critchwell, Lecturer in Education in the Department of English for Speakers of Other Languages at the University of London Institute of Education.

The course is designed for teacher trainers as well as inspectors. Selection will be based on applicants' present or future commitments to the training of ESOL teachers. Fee £595 (Residential), £345 (Non-residential).

Communicative Activities in ELT: Methodology and Materials
25 March - 6 April 1984 in Manchester

The course will consider communicative activities from a number of viewpoints. In particular methodology and materials. As well as information about latest developments there will be demonstrations of methods and materials and opportunities for members to make materials and practice using them.

The Director of Studies will be Bob Jordan of the Department of Education, University of Manchester.

The course is designed for teacher educators at primary or secondary level concerned with ELT and/or involved in materials production in ELT.

Fee £595 (Residential), £345 (Non-residential).

The Management and Administration of Public Examinations
1 - 13 April 1984 in Southampton

The basic aim of the course is to enable senior staff connected with the administration of public examinations, mainly at secondary level, in different parts of the world to bring themselves up to date with current developments in respect of their management and organisation.

The Director of Studies will be Henry G Macintosh, Secretary to the Southern Regional Examinations Board for the Certificate of Secondary Education, Southampton.

The course is intended for experienced staff of public examining agencies, ministry or department of education officials with responsibility for the construction and administration of public examinations at secondary level or above, and senior government servants in countries considering establishing their own examinations.

Fee £530 (Residential), £310 (Non-residential).

Training of In-Service Teacher Trainers for ELT:
An International Seminar

1 - 13 April 1984 in Lancaster

The course aims to give members an opportunity to exchange information about current practice and issues arising from their local circumstances and to provide information on current thinking in the United Kingdom on the professional development of serving teachers.

The Director of Studies will be Greta K Seeley, a teaching fellow in the Institute of English Language Education at the University of Lancaster.

The course is intended for teacher educators, Ministry of Education staff responsible for curriculum development and inspectors/advisers working with teachers in schools.

Fee £595 (Residential), £345 (Non-residential).

Modern Developments in the Teaching of English Literature
1 - 13 April 1984 in Aberdeen

The aim of the course is to review recent approaches to the study of English Literature at university and college level, and to assess contemporary developments in related teaching strategies.

The Director of Studies will be Dr Graeme Roberts, Lecturer in English at the University of Aberdeen.

Course members should be either teachers of English literature at advanced level in tertiary institutions or teacher trainers and specialists engaged in curriculum development. It is not intended for secondary school teachers of English language or literature.

Fee £480 (Residential), £280 (Non-residential).

Graded Objectives and Tests for English as a Foreign Language
2 - 14 April 1984 in York

The introduction of graded objectives and tests along communicative lines has transformed foreign language teaching in those British schools which have adopted the scheme. The course aims to pass on by means of lectures and seminars information on the background to graded objectives and tests, on syllabus design and on testing techniques for a communicative course. The emphasis, however, will be on the workshops in which participants will be helped to plan the introduction of a scheme of graded objectives and tests in their own country.

The Director of Studies will be Michael Buckley of the Language Teaching Centre at the University of York.

The course is intended for curriculum and syllabus developers, examiners, evaluators, heads of department in schools, advisers, inspectors and teacher educators.

Fee £595 (Residential), £345 (Non-residential).

Further information and application forms can be obtained from your local overseas Representative of The British Council or from Courses Department, The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London W1Y 2AA. Please quote reference TES/84.

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Tortured cry for help

EL SALVADOR

Hilary Wilce talks to a survivor of official violence.

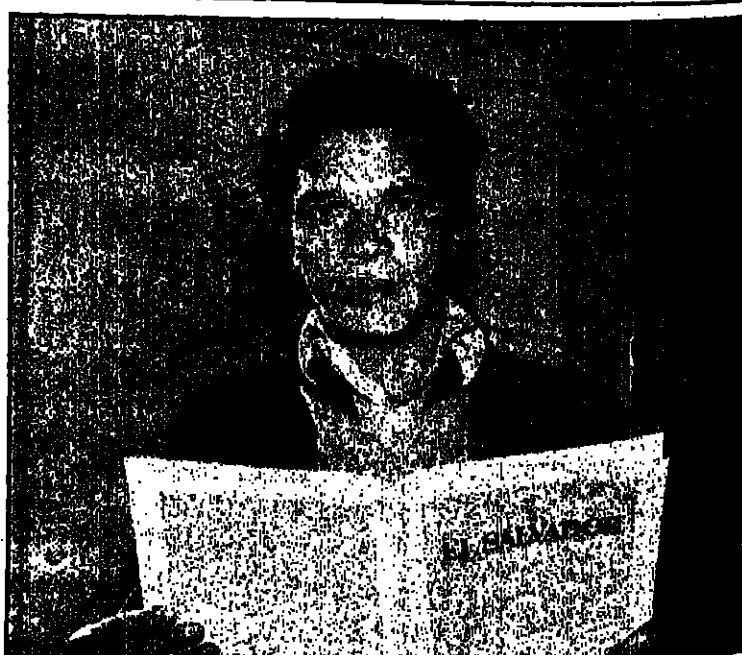
British teachers are being asked for money to help rebuild schools in troubled El Salvador as news reaches this country of the 315th teacher to be killed there since 1981.

Mario Aguilera Gutierrez, who was killed on September 29, was one of three teachers known to have been assassinated last month. Meanwhile 70 teachers remain unaccounted for, on the list of "disappeared".

Against a background of appalling violence in El Salvador the National Union of Teachers is launching its "A school for El Salvador" project. Both its local teacher associations and schools will be asked to raise funds to build new schools in the devastated country and this week the national executive voted to launch the project with £300.

The Salvadorean teachers' union, ANDES 21 June, estimates that £115,000 will pay for 57 simple schools for one year in what it terms "the liberated zones", mainly in the north of the country.

Helping to launch the campaign in Britain last week was Rafael Antonio Caries, European representative of the Salvadorean union, whose own experience bears testimony to the



Rafael Caries... spreading the word about violence

Picture: The Teacher

terrible conditions many teachers have had to face.

"He was abducted from his home one Saturday and was not traced to a prison for eight days. In jail he was interrogated and badly tortured for over two years before finally being released last April.

Outside, fears of continuing persecution led him to take shelter in the Mexican Embassy for two months before finally fleeing to Belgium.

Rafael Caries, bearing a deep scar beneath one eye and acid burns on his body from his prison ordeal, is anxious to tell teachers around the world of conditions in his country.

His message to teachers in Britain is that 1,500 schools in El Salvador have been closed, and that 4,000 teachers have been forced to take exile. Illiteracy rates can now be anything up to 64 per cent in the urban areas, and 84 per cent in the rural areas.

"The more we can pass on this information, the more it might help to force the government to do something about education", he says.

ANDES 21 June, which claims 15,000 members among El Salvador's 30,000 teachers, has been diligent in relating details about the violence its members have suffered over recent years at the hands of government security forces or street death squads. Teachers have been prime targets, it says, because in many areas of what is poor and undeveloped country, they are automatically community leaders, they also see at first hand, the effects on their pupils of poverty and repression, and have a role in encouraging free-thinking.

In 1981 the union circulated a detailed list of the killings of 124 teachers in the country, and since then has continued to catalogue and describe the continuing atrocities.

LETTERS

Going to law

Sir - May I add to your report (TES October 14) from Sweden, "Union loses test case over sucking? Lärarförbundet (SL) the Swedish NUTS is deliberately using the law to defend its members' security of tenure."

Earlier this year, local authorities sought to terminate some 1,000 posts (full and part-time). To date, about 700 posts have been saved by local union action checking that grant-aided resources have been fully used. Eight local authorities have been taken to the labour court.

In the Ornskoldsvik case in your report, the right of the authority to terminate 14 class teacher posts was upheld. On the other hand, the court did not pronounce on the essential question posed by the union, namely the way in which a local authority may use central government grants calculated on current laws and regulations.

The union is now seeking discussions with the National Board of Education, whose constitutional duty it is to administer those laws and regulations. To quote SL's journal (October 6): "SL has lost the first case. That we must accept. But we can never accept that our members' security of appointment is to depend on the arbitrary use by local authorities of central government (specific) grant."

Questions about relationships between central and local government and the legal basis of agreements freely negotiated, currently debated in England, have interesting parallels in other countries.

LEON BOUCHER
Chester College
Cheney Road
Chester

Primary interest

Sir - As consultant to the new primary social studies curriculum project in Singapore, I was particularly interested in your feature on the republic's future policy for children of high ability (TES October 14). The vigour and pace of curriculum development in Singapore is a phenomenon that merits our close attention.

The new primary social studies curriculum will be followed, in one form or another, by almost all children between 9 and 12. It is not the curriculum itself, but the examination at 12, in which social studies will be limited to the ablest pupils. Of course, this raises other questions; but at least social studies will be firmly embedded in the primary curriculum for the great majority of children in Singapore. I wonder whether as much could be said about the primary curriculum in England and Wales.

ALAN BLYTH
University of Liverpool
19-23 Abercromby Square
Liverpool

Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible and typed on one side of the paper only. The Editor reserves the right to cut or amend them.

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Segregation by selection - recipe for injustice

Sir - Selection, though inaccurate and often irrelevant, is an aspect only of the true vice of the grammar school system, namely, segregation. By intellectual attainment as much as by colour, creed, class or sex, segregation unfailingly produces lack of opportunity on the one hand and guilt, thinly veiled by prejudice, on the other. "Separate but Equal" is always a recipe for a social injustice which finally becomes intolerable. Hence the comprehensive.

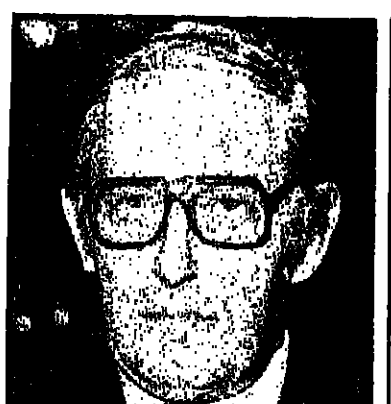
The essential gift of a comprehensive to its pupils is opportunity for

everyone; which is perfectly compatible with old-fashioned virtues like manners, discipline and hard work. Even a "bad" comprehensive, if such there be, is potentially a good one; whereas even a good grammar school prevents absolutely the proper education of all; and can only be preferred by those who seek a proper education only for some.

PHILIP OAKESHOTT
Head
Thornden School
Chandler's Ford
Hampshire



Dorothy Dakin: bold headmistress



Christopher Price: inaccurate picture

Introducing Miss Dakin...

Sir - A Mr Price, to borrow his style (TES, October 17) has had a go at introducing Miss Dakin...

introduction, for he would love her. But if he would rather wallow on in ignorance and prejudice, let me tell him that dear old Dorothy was not headmistress of an academic hot-house for young ladies of gentle birth, but of one where there was a high proportion of girls from single-parent homes, where hardship was more the rule than the exception and compassion, as well as economic skills, was in high demand.

Miss Dakin is built like a frigate and has the salty manner of one of Nelson's petty officers. As head, she was just as likely to be found playing dominoes with parents who were dockyard workers or plumbers as with those who worked with clean hands. By the way, do I now recall Mr Price? Is he the Mr Price who sent his daughter to Westminster?

Of course, when you have a bad case, aim to be offensive, and a few personalities and you can tear off a

column in no time. And add a few wild inaccuracies. The ISIS turnover is not half a million but a quarter of a million. Parents abroad were contributing more than £20m a year to the British balance of payments when Tim Devlin was in knickerbockers.

But grossly inaccurate or speciously plausible, we need Mr Price in the academic showcase. Without him and Mr Kinnoch there would be no one to keep us on our toes. And let me correct another misnomer of his: independent schools are not really at their best under what he calls a sympathetic government. Our real friends have always been Labour. Over nearly 20 years Labour governments and people like Mr Price have kept private schools full. I cannot conceive of one single benefit received from the Tories. So let's have them back, with safe seats for Mr Price and my old public school mate Tony Benn as soon as possible.

D R C ENGLEHEART
Moffatt School
Bewdley
Worcestershire

Hands tied

Sir - There is a tone of admiration in Nick Wood's account of "get-tough heads" among the Independents (TES, October 7).

Mr Christopher Turner has been able to play two trump cards. He was able to expel 12 boys all in one term and he has the full support of parents.

In the state sector - where such expulsion is impossible, where some, at least, of those 12 boys will have been thrust upon less than welcoming heads and where the parental attitude is often active antagonism - such "get-tough" aspirations are but pila in the sky for heads and staffs alike as they steadily become more demoralized and despondent.

The moral and material support of society and governments will be needed if the inexorable drift towards aggression and violence in our secondary schools is to be arrested.

SHELAGH ALLEN
11 Bowring Drive
Parkgate
South Wirral

Logical lament

Sir - For some 10 years now my little department has been entering candidates for London Board GCE Logic. We present each year up to 30 pupils at O level and 10 at A level.

Now I learn that the Board is about to abolish the A level examination because it is not financially viable. The combined O and A level syllabus provides an excellent mental discipline for our most able boys. The A level syllabus, I can attest, appeals to pupils who are specializing in arts, science and mathematics alike.

They gain a sounder philosophical grasp of the relations obtaining between science and art. Furthermore, they emerge from the course with an understanding of the mathematical relations that underlie computer theory.

Alas alone, I wonder, in lamenting the demise of this exciting A level subject and will this letter be the only whimper audible at its departure?

TREVOR EATON
Head of the Philosophy Department
Norton Knatchbull School
Ashford
Kent

Fine distinction

Sir - I note Ms Beverley Shaw (TES, October 14) questioned whether comprehensives have abolished selection because:

- 1 Children are still selected for entry by administrators (from neighbourhood feeder primaries etc).
- 2 Most children are banded, set or streamed by the age of 13.
- 3 Teachers distinguish between able, average and less able within mixed ability classes.

I would like to make the following observations.

- A single national comprehensive school is clearly impracticable so allocation to a school (by catchment areas/neighbourhood, some degree of parental choice etc) is necessary - but that is not the same as selection by ability.
- I believe fervently in both the equal worth of all pupils and the need to educate according to age, aptitude and ability. Too often it is suggested we treat all pupils as if they were the same and are charged with mediocre uniformity. Yet in practice compre-

hensive schools are and must be fully aware of individual differences - hence our flexibility and variety of curriculum, teaching strategies, pupil groupings etc. "Selective" we are not - nor do we aspire to be "grammar schools" for all. Ms Shaw's final comment is truly astounding and worthy of inclusion in the "No Comment" section of your journal - "And there is evidence that teachers distinguish between the able, the average and the less able within mixed ability classes". An awareness of individual strengths and weaknesses is basic to all effective teaching irrespective of pupil grouping. In a mixed ability situation a lack of such awareness would be utterly disastrous.

I truly hope I have misunderstood the comments from a member of the School of Education, Durham.

J A L WELLS
Head
Pool School
Redruth
Cornwall

Re-training need

Sir - I feel I must reply to the letter from Mr B. R. Grace, principal of Barnfield College, Luton (TES, October 14).

Over the past three years and recently with the advent of the YTS and NTVET the curriculum, teaching and learning methods have so changed and are changing that some form of teacher training and updating is absolutely necessary.

Gone are the days when specialists in law, accountancy and government etc could get by on imparting their knowledge to, on the whole, motivated students of post-compulsory schooling age.

With the advent of BEC and TEC (BTEC) subject specialisms have broken down to emerge into integrated modular approaches with an emphasis upon student-centred learning rather than a tutor "chalk and talk" approach.

Knowledge of individual subject areas is now not nearly enough to cope with and adjust to the learning approaches necessary to satisfy BTEC

aims and objectives. Since September this year the college has an intake of more than 100 YTS students/trainees covering a wide range of abilities and aptitudes.

YTS students need to attain skills in basic core areas, both specific and generic and to attain facilities to solve problems related to the world of work and non work.

Added to this are areas such as guidance and counselling, together with assessment skills that are needed by teachers.

To cope with and adjust to the BTEC philosophy and the objectives of the YTS and NTVET it is necessary for teachers to gain the necessary skills which can only be derived from "modern" teacher training methods and in course training.

Unfortunately both the local education authority and the college authorities have yet to grasp this, as finance for this area is such a low priority.

TH BOURNETT
NATFHE branch secretary
Barnfield College
New Bedford Road
Luton

Do unto others...

Sir - Whatever the teachers' unions disagree about, they seem unanimous that members should not make reports critical of their colleagues without at the same time acquainting the people concerned with the nature of the criticisms.

I have never seen any comparable concern that references critical of pupils should be sent by the pupils concerned before they go to the

prospective employer/admission tutor.

When completing UCCA reports we are writing of people who within a few months will be legally adult, if they are not so already. Why do we not accord them the same rights that we expect for ourselves?

R D BEALE
2nd Master
The Grammar School
Princess Elizabeth Way
Cheltenham

Cash aid

Sir - I hope I may be permitted, through the medium of your correspondence columns, to request the support of teachers and other educationalists who are interested in promoting the teaching of money sense and money management in schools and colleges.

The North West Region Education in Money Management Association has built up, during the past few years, a comprehensive data bank of teaching materials which can be supplied to schools and colleges by commercial financial organizations and consumer organizations.

My association now wishes to incorporate into its data bank examples of money management materials produced by local education authorities, teacher working groups and individual

teachers. The main purpose of this letter is to invite professional colleagues who have produced such materials for use in schools and colleges to contact us.

Any advisory staffs, school staffs or individual teachers who are prepared to cooperate with my association in this project should contact the secretary, Mr C J Meek, at the Education and Training Centre, Hind Hill Street, Heywood, Rochdale, Greater Manchester (tel: Heywood 624923).

There is not, at present, any national money management organization to coordinate the work of regional and local associations; hence my appeal through your correspondence columns.

GEORGE GRACE
Chairman, NWMMA
17 Fairmount Avenue
Brighton BN1 4JL

FEATURES

TESTING TALK

As the exam boards prepare to include oral English tests in the new 16 plus exams, Margaret MacLure and Tom Gorman report on the speaking tests pioneered by the Assessment of Performance Unit



interact with each other rather than the assessor, we hope to minimise some of the unease or anxiety which might arise out of a solitary confrontation with an unfamiliar adult.

Performance can also be affected by the nature of the task they are asked to do. One of our main concerns has been to devise tasks which can be seen as having some genuine communicative purpose or outcome, and which are interesting and enjoyable to carry out. We were particularly keen to avoid setting up tasks which might seem strange or unrelated to the usual purposes for which they use talk, for instance we avoid asking them to give information to somebody who already (and obviously) has that information.

Assessing in pairs helps here as one pupil can show the partner how to play the game just learned, rather than have to display her knowledge to an omniscient assessor who is obviously already "in the know". Similarly, tasks which involve making up or re-telling stories, or re-counting information that has just been listened to, can be done with an audience not previously acquainted with the material.

We do however include some tasks or sub-tasks which involve interaction with the assessor - such as answering questions based on interpretation of tape-recorded material - since this sort of interaction with adults is of course another fairly common experience for pupils, particularly in classrooms.

We do not make the clear-cut distinction which is common in oral assessment between "speaking" tests on the one hand and "listening" tests on the other, with separate batteries of tests for each. Instead we have tried to devise situations in which listening and speaking are integral and reciprocal parts of a total communicative activity.

Each pair usually takes part in three different tasks. The assessors who administer these are also responsible for recording on cassette all the talk produced in the course of the session for subsequent marking and checking, and for giving an initial impression mark in relation to a seven-point scale for the various components of each task. The on-the-spot assessors, who are the only markers to have access to non-verbal aspects of pupils' performance - such as their use of eye-contact and gesture - also give pupils a rating for "orientation to listener": the extent to which they make eye-contact with the assessor and use appropriate eye-group, and then chooses a marker for the pair. For some tasks, two pairs are assessed in form groups of four. By allowing pupils to take part in pairs and, in most cases, to

taped records are returned to the NFER they are then impression-marked a second time by a different panel of markers. In the 1982 survey each tape was marked twice at this stage. The impression marking is designed to capture markers' rapid, subjective judgments about the relative merits of pupils' performance. We find that there is a high degree of agreement across markers, and the impression marks are used as a basis for generalizations about group performance; for example, to contrast the performance of pupils in different regions of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, or to look at differences in performance between girls and boys.

The patterns of performance which are beginning to emerge from analysis of the impression marks correspond in many cases to those which have also been found in the successive surveys of reading and writing. For instance groups from schools in inner-city areas tend to achieve relatively lower average scores in all three language modes. However, evidence is also starting to emerge which suggests that there are differences between some of the patterns found in reading and writing assessment and those identified in the oracy survey. For instance while girls have consistently been found to perform more effectively on each task included in the writing survey, in the oracy survey girls and boys performed equally well across the whole sample.

In the third stage of marking a randomly selected sample of recordings is assessed in much more detail. The marking schemes developed for each task are designed to give more detailed information about pupils' performance than we can get from their overall marks. We look at sequential structuring of the discourse, lexical and grammatical aspects of the talk, and features such as tempo, pacing and hesitation.

We also look at dimensions of talk which are associated with particular types of activity. In the task which involves sequencing pictures to form a narrative, pupils are assessed for the ways in which they create "events" or "episodes" from the pictures, and for their use of devices which introduce characterisation, suspense and other story-like features into the skeletal sequence of events linked by the pictures.

The categories we used were derived from an extensive analysis of large numbers of recorded examples of pupils carrying out each of the tasks, so that the categories would clearly relate to identifiable characteristics of their talk. We consider it to be extremely important that

assessment categories should be based on what 11-year-olds actually do when asked to tell a story or relay instructions, rather than on more abstract notions such as "fluency", "content", "confidence" and so on, which are difficult to define.

The analytic marking exercise therefore gives us information about how pupils actually go about carrying out various kinds of communicative tasks. It is used to identify the different sorts of skills which contribute to the overall success or otherwise of speech activities, and tasks. It shows how different strategies and skills can be used to achieve similar interactional ends, and how these components relate to overall pupil performance.

Although it should be stressed that these findings are still tentative at this stage, the analytic marking procedures look as if they will be able to yield valuable insights for teachers and others interested in promoting oracy skills in the classroom. We hope that they will be useful in providing a picture of what 11-year-olds are capable of doing.

The report on the 1982 survey will provide many examples from transcripts of the tape recordings which exemplify the differing skills and strategies pupils may adopt. We hope that teachers will ultimately be able to use our categories and examples as an aid to identifying those aspects of pupils' talk which they might want to focus on for classroom work in oracy.

It is important to stress, however, that the work done for the APU surveys is specifically designed for large scale monitoring. In order to adopt the techniques developed for application by teachers or for use in national examinations at secondary level further developments would be necessary. Nevertheless, certain issues are raised and techniques offered which are relevant to the assessment of spoken language in different settings and for a variety of purposes. Some of the most important of these relate to procedures for soliciting naturalistic talk in assessment conditions.

The work and the findings which it has yielded so far are still tentative. The more closely we look at pupils' spoken language abilities, the more we realise how complex and subtle the business of communicating is. The most that we can claim at this point is to have made a start in disclosing this complexity and in suggesting where to start in trying to assess it reliably.

Margaret MacLure is a research officer and Tom Gorman a principal research officer at the National Foundation for Educational Research.

Capability Benford

Julia Hagedorn meets the head of a village school who is determined to put learning into the hands of parents and pupils

I found Melvyn Benford, head of Lewknor primary school, half way up a ladder living some curtains. Almost before he reached the floor he had launched into an enthusiastic account of the philosophy which two years ago led to the school winning the coveted Royal Society of Arts Education for Capability Award for schools that encourage pupils "to be competent, to cope, to create and to cooperate".

Twelve years ago, when Melvyn Benford came to this small Oxfordshire village school, complete with thatched roof and village green, he decided to "put all the ingredients into a melting pot".

"Many of the traditional values survive, but I loosened the bonds", the bonds being the division of the school into subjects, age groups, classes and teachers. The biggest constraint on a teacher, he believes, is to be alone in the classroom all day.

Classes at Lewknor are not separated into infant and junior. The infants work together, three times a week only. Normally, the 50-plus children are split into groups that have nothing to do with age or ability.

The head and the two teachers (one privately funded by parents and a charity) each have a group for 30 minutes every morning. They are responsible for keeping an eye on the children within this group and checking that their basic skills are up to scratch. This means that each teacher works with children across the age range of four to 11 and oversees the development that occurs within their age span.

In their individual work, each child is encouraged to use a variety of resources: books, tapes, conventional reading schemes and textbooks because, Melvyn says, the parents wish it. However, the children are divided into two mixed age groups during this time so that the older ones can help the younger.

On Tuesday afternoons, the children are in charge of the entire content and organization of their work. But they must tell the teachers in the morning what they are planning to do, why and how.

On another afternoon, teachers plan the work but share it out among small groups of mixed ages who investigate problems together - the older ones directing. At the end of the afternoon, the entire school meets to listen to the group leaders explaining what they have found out. The little ones may not understand much of what is going on but they get the experience of listening while the team leaders learn to talk clearly to an audience.

Other groups are taken by teachers on subjects the teachers may be particularly interested in such as the development of folk music in England and North America.

Teachers have to abandon control over the children and the curriculum and allow them to determine their own learning

By the time the children are top juniors, Melvyn feels they must be prepared for the different approach of the secondary school. So work is done on the blackboard and French and German classes begin in order to give confidence in foreign pronunciations.

In spite of the apparent randomness of some of the curriculum at Lewknor, the children perform well in separate subjects when they go on to secondary schools. Tables are still learnt by rote and so is spelling.

It all seems to work, and not because Lewknor is the sort of trendy, middle class school found in some rural areas. In 1977, the village came out bottom of the list of Oxfordshire villages in a survey of incomes and social class. There has been

some new building since and the social mix has improved, but there is still a great deal of suspicion about Melvyn Benford's ideas.

Parental attitudes vary from grudging tolerance to complete acceptance with a heavy measure of gossip thrown in, he says. What the school is trying to do is still not fully understood. Many parents thought "children should be sat in rows and made to learn".

Melvyn Benford seems to enjoy being in the firing line: "When you have a belief you have to put it into practice," he says.

That belief extends to a firm conviction that parents are the most powerful learning agents in a child's life. Since October he has been inviting parents to collect their children early from school one afternoon a week to work with them at home.

'The biggest constraint on a teacher is to be alone in the classroom all day'

How does it pay in this scheme and the change in the attitude of both parents and the school is amazing, the head says. The parents are much more profoundly involved in their child's work and, through discussions with him about the work they do at home, are beginning to think more like teachers.

Many of the parents are still reluctant to take part but Melvyn keeps trying. He has started "paired" reading schemes after school between parent and child along the lines of the Haringey and Belfield projects. He says to parents, "I'll educate your child as best as possible with all the tools available to me if that's what you want. But are you going to turn away the opportunity for them to do even better?"

In his desire to involve the community as a whole - not solely the parents - the staff literally knock on doors to tell villagers what is going on at the school. One of the two main classrooms has become a community hall with daytime access split equally between school and community. They tell them about the Tuesday Club where children and adults mix together, about the outings arranged for village and pupils.

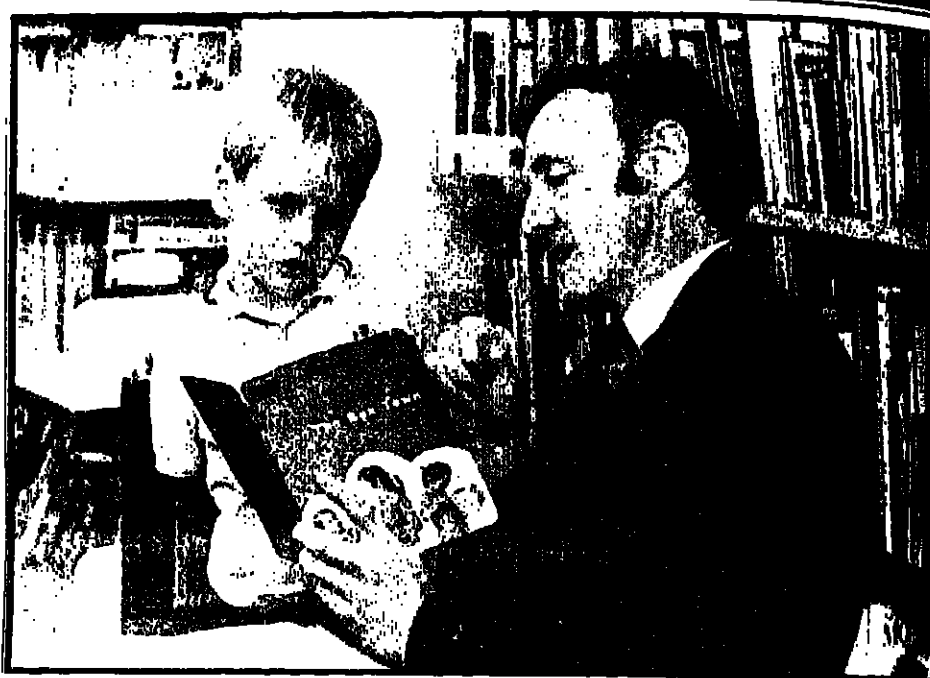
A newsletter goes to 150 homes in the village and is run off on a copier bought with money from the Schools Council and the RSA award. Villagers pay 5p a copy and the children have learned to produce the copies, thus "extending the capability concept where ever there is a chance".

Perhaps one of the best times to judge a school socially is at lunch-time. At Lewknor, lunch is an unusually pleasant experience. The older children sit with the younger ones, supervising and serving them. They also bring the head, two staff and any visitor their meals with a smile and a query at the right time as to second helpings.

After lunch, there is no forced exodus to the outside. On the day of my visit, a couple were using the microcomputer upstairs, a group sat in one of the rooms playing their musical instruments, and in the hall another group had organized a free dance session with the help of an old record player. There was no need for any adult supervision. The children were putting into practice Melvyn Benford's philosophy.

"Teachers," he concluded "have to abandon control over the children and the curriculum and allow them to determine their own learning. This is difficult, but without it there is no real learning for capability."

Further details of the Education for Capability Awards from The Royal Society of Arts, John Adam Street, Adelphi, London WC2N 6BZ, can



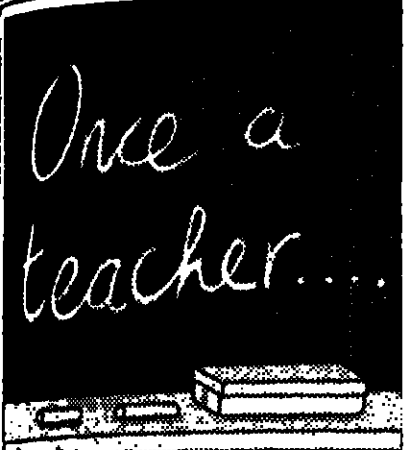
Headmaster Melvyn Benford reviews progress



Home and school: an afternoon of geography with mother (left) and the thatched school roof and village green playground.



Mothers assist with music teaching (above) and older children are encouraged to help younger ones.



Once a teacher....

You want to know why Rob gave up teaching? Mrs Corbett exclaimed with some incredulity when I phoned. "Why he started in the first place would be a better question."

"I suppose," her husband said thoughtfully, rubbing the sawdust from his Sellotape enveloped nose, "I suppose I gave up because all the time I was in school I was wondering if, in the outside world, people did anything real between one holiday and the next. Funny thing - I reckon I've done more teaching since I came out of the job than ever I did when I was in it."

Rob Corbett - Corbie to his friends - furniture maker, designer and Member of the Norfolk Guild of Craftsmen, is totally unpretentious. "It did come as a bit of a shock though to find I was a drop-out," he says in his soft Norfolk tones. "The caravanners told me - 'You've chosen a lovely spot to drop-out, Mr Corbett,' they say. And I think - that's odd. Here I am working under pressure, all hours, taking furniture to London and Scotland, doing the shows in the summer and I've been a drop-out all along. Least I know I can't go any lower."

Copsey village, home of Corbett Woodwork is half way between Norwich and nowhere. In summer, the air is heavy with the scent of corn and poppy, the verges gaudy with poppy, rapeseed and knapweed and the field corners dotted by great ancient trees - oak, ash and hick.

West and talked in the shady meadow behind the workshop. Mallow blossomed, a young hawk chased butterflies and a pair of sleek, brown rats slipped between the reed stems. In winter, when the wind shrieks down from the north and the stream floods and the caravanners are gone, it may seem less lovely.

As to why he started teaching, "... the Depression, that's all" said Corbie. "Just the Depression. Having struggled through that my parents were determined we boys should have no professions. I'd always wanted to work with wood. My grandfather was village carpenter, my brother's a woodworker and our children have followed on. It's in the blood."

"After I came out of the Forces I went to Loughborough. Marvellous place... Barnsley, the great cabinet maker, was there... been my model ever since. I never intended to teach. It just came along."

Twelve years came about in all. At Stansted Secondary in Hertfordshire. Then after a decade of detentions and hitches, leavened only by the school making one real piece of furniture, a dresser, a table, a chest of drawers, every morning, he decided to leave. But not precipitately.

"They needed money. 'We had £50 saved up. When I went to see the building society the manager said, 'I fear you are sadly undercapitalized' and Mr Corbett, but he promised to consider it. Then, when the letter came it was addressed to a Mr Corbett... I didn't bother to open it for days. And it was... a pretty obvious Freudian slip, I thought."

They scraped together £500 for a ramshackle house (this was 1961 remember), spent the first year expanding it and the second perfecting the design and jigs for the future Corbett Woodwork and looking for a house/workshop. In 1964 they found it. In Copsey. Rob handed in his notice and they struck out alone.

"Initially, it is not a bad place to sell furniture. We got tourists coming through... people in the display in the shop or at one of the shows or they find us in the Eastern Arts craft fair. And yes - quite a lot come on commission."

"It has to be a bit out of the way though - keep a sort of a fence around us like - that way if a customer goes to a bit of trouble to find us - then I know they're really interested - saves a lot of bad sales, that does."

In the early days he supplemented his earnings with part-time teaching at Greshams school. "I got £1 a week from that. The rest had to come from the workshop. A farm labourer was getting £10 a week. It was just possible."

Now, as he has as much work as he can

FOR THE LOVE OF WOOD

Rob Corbett tells Susan Thomas why teaching CDT goes against the grain



Rob Corbett doing what he likes best in his Norfolk workshop

manage and three assistants - one daughter, one nephew and one local lad who came, straight from school, ten years ago. A host of other youngsters have come and gone, quite a few to set up their own workshops.

Many of them carry on in the tradition he taught them - producing designs which glorify the wood, enhancing the natural grain and colour and scoring foreign woods and the use of stains.

From the beginning, customers commissioned individual pieces. He has made pulpits for persons, pews for parishioners, coachgrasses for choristers, and beautiful golden furniture to grace the homes of Englishmen - strong, uncluttered and so sleek that you have to stroke them.

But does he ever clash with a customer over taste? "I reckon if neither of us is downright miserable, I've got it about right," he says. Even so, sometimes cooperation is beyond him.

When a local church wanted a coronation chair and produced "a dreadful example of a thing to copy - it had great bulbous legs and a padded leather seat", he rebelled. "I made a slender wooden scaffold and hung a moulded wooden seat on it." It was a triumph of good over bad design and the vicar loved it.

He tries not to read about other designers, he says, for fear it will inhibit his own work. He's hard put to describe his own style, and so am I. "Modern furniture made in the traditional way," he says. But there is more to it than that. Perhaps the secret lies in the bold horizontals, sweeping stretcher bars and wonderfully complex arrangements which lie beneath the stark table tops.

He is, above all, an English wood buff. "That's beautiful," he says, stroking the grain of a refectory table with a loving, work-chipped thumb. "Can't better it: I reckon only Englishmen can work English wood, understand it, know what it's endured through our winters."

"Look at this" he said indicating a sheer, stark cherry bookcase. "Looks lovely when it's made up. Now cherry's very unforgiving. If you don't cut it exact it'll split - craack - right through. Elm now, that's accommodating, it'll ease itself round to your way."

He is not happy with craft education these days. "To my mind, the way they teach it in schools and colleges is all wrong. That's very presumptuous of me to say so, I daresay, but I don't think you can design anything till you have the skills and you know about the qualities of the material."

"It'd be like teaching children to read without learning the ABC. Though maybe they do that too. I had a lad come to me from the Royal College of Art. Trained as a designer. In what I ask him? Just design, he tells me, anything - wood, metal, plastic, clay. How can you design before you know the materials?"

"Anyway, youngsters of 14, 15, 16 aren't even interested. They only want to make things. Give them a good design by all means. Talk to them about it, but don't expect them to do it for themselves until they've learnt the skills."

"I'm not the only one thinks this way. I've got friends - who've been asked to teach this new Craft Design Technology - say to me 'I don't know what the hell I'm supposed to be doing - wish to God I could go back to teaching a decent wood.' And where it's not too rare to find good craftsmen, it's very rare to find craftsmen designers. It's asking too much of the kids."

His experience is that youngsters simply don't want to know about designing for four, five, even six years after starting in the workshop. "At first they just gawp at you. 'What... they say if you try to interest them, 'what'... But later they become creative. That's when they should go to college."

He gets a great deal of pleasure from teaching his trainees. So has he ever regretted his decision to leave the classroom? "Never. The pay is worse, the pressure can be very intense and of course, it's a very tenuous existence, but there aren't many people as can say they're doing the one thing they always wanted to do."

"You know, when I came here, after a while I joined the Rotary Club, and for the first time in my life I felt that people took me seriously, a proper member of the village who was making a real contribution to society. Now I never felt like that when I was a teacher."

One of the most important things schools can do to help industry and themselves is to teach keyboard skills argues John Huffell

Key skills

Businessmen are asked from time to time by educationists "what are the future changing needs you require from the education system"? No clear, concise answer emerges, apart from a feeling that with changing technology, some changes need to take place. There is however one area that will greatly benefit all young people as well as our nation trying to compete in international markets and looking for ways of improving our competitiveness.

The new skill is keyboard operation which up to now has been exclusively the province of typing and secretarial courses. It will be no substitute for a good grounding in literacy, numeracy and communication skills, but I believe it could challenge the limited resources available in other subject areas and come above many of them if priorities have to be established.

In the past the lack of keyboard skills has led to inefficiencies amongst many people who earn a living by producing prose without the benefit of a typist to convert it into clearly legible form. Today, as computers invade every walk of life, the range of keyboard users grows and grows.

The most obvious users are those operating computers and supporting the computer industry in such activities as the development of software applications. This group of keyboard users is growing daily. The finance industry covering banking and insurance is one of the leaders, but other businesses such as travel, retailing and warehousing are closing the gap.

The education system is currently spending a large amount of effort understanding the benefits computers can bring to the process of learning. We see most institutions of higher education with a comprehensive, if still inadequate, range of computing equipment in use by both staff and students. The penetration through to secondary and primary education will limit the rate at which schools will move towards every student using a keyboard almost every day of their school life.

The other area opening up to the widespread use of computers has come about through the introduction of the relatively inexpensive personal computer.

In the not too distant future even the smallest business will use a computer together with an increasing number in the homes, particularly those of the younger generation.

What are the benefits to be gained by training in keyboard skills?

A person using a single finger and not familiar with the positioning of the individual keys will probably perform at 5 words/minute.

Once the positions of the keys are understood this could probably increase to 10 words/minute. Recently I heard of two young schoolboys who after 2 weeks of training were achieving 18 words/minute and the average typist manages 50 to 60 words/minute with speeds of over 100 achievable by the outstanding performers.

It would seem, then, that if keyboard skills are taught and practised there is a potential improvement in performance of between five and ten times the rate achieved by the untrained. This can be directly related to the amount of equipment required to support a given number of people. It can be readily seen how scarce capital funds can be more efficiently applied to any application, whether it be in business, industry or education. The sooner we start, the better.

John Huffell is a senior manager responsible for introducing new technology into IBM's UK manufacturing operations.

TALKBACK

Disruptive teachers?

MARK VAUGHAN

The most depressing thing about some people working in units for so-called "disruptive pupils" (Jane Lovey, "Teacher bashers" Talkback, TES, September 30) is the patronizing attitude they have towards the teenagers in their care, coupled with a horrifyingly fatalistic approach that nothing really can be done: more than anything else, their charges are seeing out time.

Horifying, because the major effect of these units is to reinforce a sense of failure and rejection in their students, rather than to question the system that "failed" them. The rapid growth in these "safety valves" for the normal system - sin bins, hushes, sanctuaries or whatever else they are called - is all the more alarming when the other



main effects are brought into focus: they deny the basic right of access to an education and a curriculum suitable to the student's age, ability and aptitude; they drastically reduce the opportunities for securing some kind of qualification before leaving school; they reinforce the (false) belief that education does, and should stop at 16 (Section 8 of the 1944 Education Act guarantees the right to full-time education in school, or college, for all up to the age of 19); and the methods of selection, absence of appeal and the disturbingly low rate of return to the mainstream sector, leave a lot to be desired.

What an indictment Jane Lovey's opening remarks are: "We know that none of our pupils will be going back to a high school".

Selection for sin bins is the same as selection for any other part of the education service, and the same pitfalls apply, not least the one that provision pre-empt a decision on placement. The local comprehensive school is told what its quota of "rejects" can be, and it finds them. Why do some schools have a higher quota than others, and some schools refer none at all?

Jane Lovey should realize how damaging a role these units are playing in being pawns of selection in a game where mainstream teachers and heads have been re-defining the norms of the so-called acceptable members of their client group, rather than questioning the relevance of the educational "package", which she light-heartedly suggests needs to be sold more vigorously by Saatchi and Saatchi.

There is nothing wrong with hard-selling a social service (education) to its consumers, but that should only come in this case after a serious reappraisal of the goods on offer.

But there is hope. A slowly growing number of primary and comprehensive schools are now, not only containing many more of the problems they would have previously referred to the units mentioned above, but also successfully integrating children with a variety of handicaps into mainstream education. Plenty of young people previously excluded from ordinary schools are now flourishing in them, and benefiting from a stable education process. This is a small, but highly significant social change.

Evidence being collected on a national level by CSIE increasingly shows that the two issues go hand in hand: that is, behind the more successful schemes is a wholesale re-evaluation of a school's structures, and its various educational and social processes. Research has shown that the deeper this investigation into the basics goes, the greater the new strengths of the school will be.

It is the teachers themselves who then realize the illogicality of introducing identifiably "handicapped" children at one end of the school, and rejecting others at the other end, because they have a different kind of special educational need.

The 1981 Education Act, covering special educational needs, gives the basis for a greater exchange of information between parents and professionals. This is essential if a new time between the two is to develop, and we are to see a genuinely comprehensive education system responding to the needs for the local community.

Mark Vaughan is coordinator of the Centre for Studies on Integration in Education.

To CEE is to believe

EDDIE DAVIES

Since the Certificate of Extended Education was never validated I suppose that legally speaking, it never existed. The course was a bit of a joke, I know is that when we did away with the academic bar to the sixth-form it saved a lot of heartache and a deep sense of failure and profitlessness.

We started off with communications and mathematical studies. The shape of the former had to be changed so that we could call it English, because it was the only title which local employers and others seemed to find acceptable when they were searching for what we were offering to offer an equivalent to the O level.

The new course did not trick because basically we stuck to our tenets. It came into the sixth without O level English or mathematics or its equivalent then you must include it in your personal timetable. To many of that new sixth, resitting failed O levels and converting CSEs was a thankless and futile task. The two new subjects we started, worked.

There have always been, even going back to grammar school intakes, exceptionally bright students who, for some reason or another simply could not cope with London University O level English language. The nature of the new modular course also helped them, and often brought an equivalent success acceptable to university and polytechnic admission tutors.

The appropriateness of the courses encouraged every other faculty in the school to make a contribution so that within three years there was a package into which everyone could dip. Five components: communications, mathematical studies, a creative art, a social study, a science - connected a balanced curriculum which was an extension of what students had been doing in the main school. It gave them courses that had a far greater currency in terms of relevance and up-to-date affairs than the more academic ones they had already gone through.

By the time we linked up with the local college, which incidentally soon introduced many of these courses themselves, and once work experience had been firmly established, could offer the one-year sixth a refashioning

and stimulating package. We could offer the more academically able the opportunity to pick out those ingredients they needed. Some faculties even established these particular courses as halfway houses to A level.

Because it works and works so well, there is, at least within the Southern Regional Examinations Board (SREB) area, an increasing number of students wanting to take up the subject on offer and in many schools we believed that at last we had managed to devise appropriate courses to lead our students into adult life.

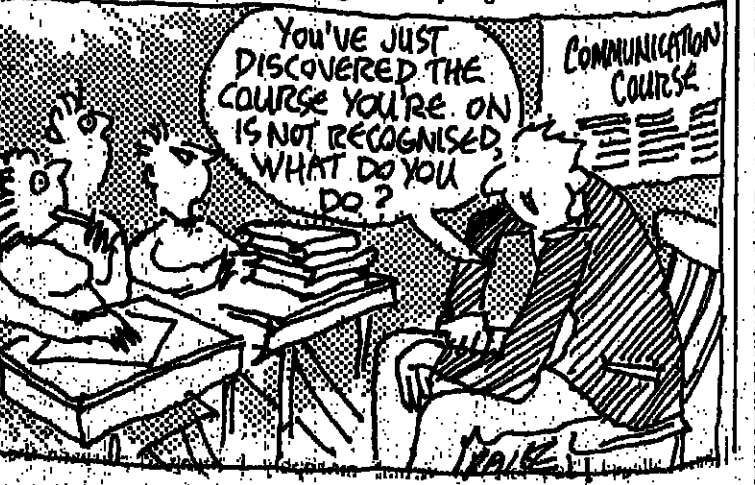
Now, apparently, we have to say for the City and Guilds, and the RSA and BETEC to produce for us some thing similar but different. Or maybe in 10 years from now they will still be trying to reach the standard we have left behind. It is a bewildering and sad story. Here are the counts and here are the teachers, and here is the administrative machinery all ticking over and even expanding in spite of a confirmed denouement.

The Certificate of Extended Education is broad, full of vocational possibilities and extremely flexible. It is alive and well, but the DES has decided to get on another bandwagon.

The CEE of the SREB includes all the recommended ingredients of the CPVE including the core and the options and, furthermore, it reaches out from the main school curriculum. When I recall the criteria of the 17-plus guidelines I despair. This school, and many like it, find them an integral part of the criteria which have governed the creation of the main school curriculum. The all-permeating guidance system, the introduction to social, economic and political thought; the personal and social skills are already there.

To satisfy the DES do we have to do it all again? The preparation for adult life, working or leisureed, does not start at 16 or 17 or 18. It begins at the beginning. No one can pretend that there is an ideal solution. But I need a lot of persuading to accept that what we already have available and what we can easily add to, amend or adjust cannot serve the new Certificate of Extended Education as long as students may take the whole package or select from its parts those courses needed to advance their prospects in employment or further and higher education. Time, effort and money could be saved without any loss of quality. It seems a bargain.

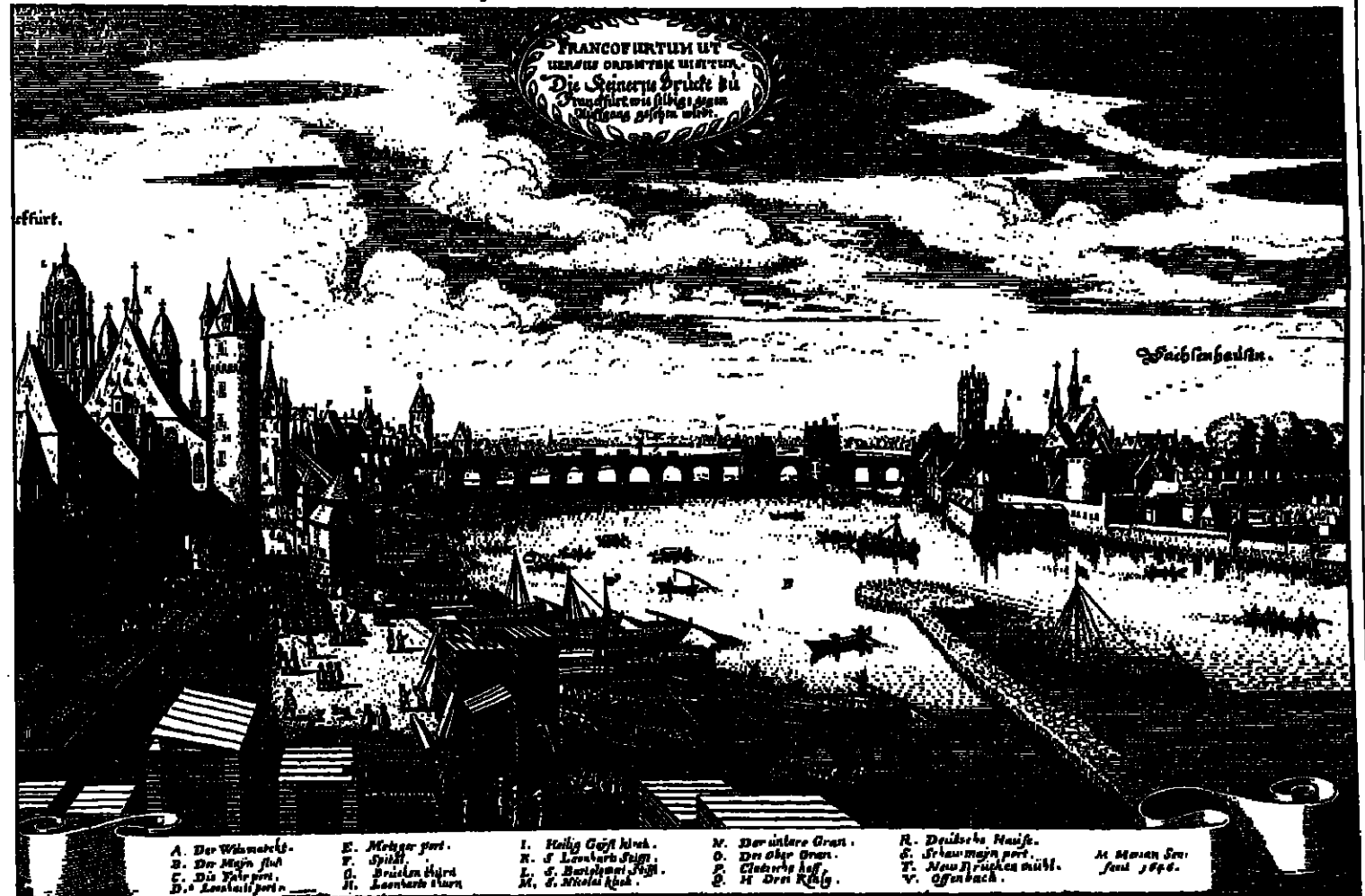
Eddie Davies is a deputy head at Carbrooke High School, Newport, Isle of Wight.



REVIEW

Tomorrow the world

Michael Church reports on the trade wars at this year's Frankfurt Book Fair



- and as it was 300 years earlier

Some of the most flushed and excited faces were to be found among the purveyors of goods to the hundreds of millions who want to improve their English. Take a country like Greece, where English is very badly taught in schools: for a population of only nine million there are 2,000 private ELT institutions, to whom British publishers will this year sell £100 million worth of materials. It's no wonder Oxford, Cambridge, Longman and Nelson are among the Greeks with rival materials for the revamped Cambridge exam which comes into operation next year, or that Cambridge (the publishers) are trading - cheekily, as their rivals think - on their local links with Cambridge (the university). Twenty million American citizens have a shaky grasp of English: next month OUP are bringing out *The Oxford Student's Dictionary of American English* not only for those 20 million but also for those in Japan or Latin America who say "potter" rather than "got" and for whom "to go like a bomb" is likelier to have a negative American meaning than its cheerful British one.

Last year the ELT publishers were all but taken out of Argentina, Mexico and Nigeria. This year all the talk was of expansion and diversification. While OUP are on the one hand continuously reprinting the *COD* and Hornby's *Advanced Learner's Dictionary* in runs of hundreds of thousands they are on the other launching a mammoth adult home-study course co-produced with Mitchell-Beazley and a Spanish firm. This expensive endeavour comes complete with cassettes and will be sold both as a part-work and in book form door-to-door. Stephen Ward, OUP's head of ELT, praises it with missionary fervour: hitherto publishers "have been chucking anything into the home study market" - taking ancient class books for Brazil, then adding cassettes and slipping on a technological element "and calling it home study - it's ridiculous". He and his colleagues are also launching *Wonderworld*, a multi-media teaching course for 5- to 10-year-olds in Western European countries. "We've produced it alone, but now we're representing a relatively untapped market. The risk is probably not enormous."

"Teach yourself": if only publishers would still use that perfectly adequate phrase. The one they prefer, of course, is "self-study", as though the language of the grisly solism; the even gristlier, "self-learning", now crops up on some ELT title pages. It is ironic, if entirely predictable, that those who spread the English language round the globe should themselves be linguistically so inept. Longman, the other ELT giant, were in equally poor form. A representative of this firm flatly contradicted the OUP assertion that they had not been party to the "dictionary war": Hornby, it was

through the arrival of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. (In this game no one gives sales figures.) The *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English* - a more useful thesaurus than *Rogers's* - was now also about to enter the lists, and the Longman Self Study (I) Department has just produced a part-work called *International English*, co-published with foreign firms (to take advantage of their local marketing expertise) and already selling well in Brazil and Spain: direct competition for *Oxford English*.

There is now also, as another stand proudly proclaimed, something called *Longman Leisure*, to which Longman Self Study has given birth. Longman Leisure means video and, more significantly, computer software. *Hot Dot Spotter* - "a game of speed and skill which teaches number recognition and response to children aged between four and eight years" - is, with its siblings, only selling in Britain so far, but European sales are round the next corner. Pamela Norris, their progenitrix, agreed with the oft-expressed view among the British contingent that the juvenile games market would soon peak and that the real jackpot would be won by whoever first sussed out the adult market coming just behind. She had been talking to dealers and she had some theories as to what the grown-up computer-freaks would want, but she was understandably not prepared to divulge them to *TES*. Books about computers, as well as software for them, were among the British things foreign publishers were most curious about: here, once again, we lead the world.

And apropos software, it was revealing to hear the managing director of that quintessentially classroom publisher Schofield and Sims say that his company's expansion into computer materials would be aimed at homes as well as at the school market. Falling rolls, inflation, decline in capitation allowances, the same old story.

Piracy, it was agreed, now affected everyone. Britain's ELT publishers are about to launch a campaign through their main trade journal to remind teachers of the law, and they are collecting evidence on the schools most given to wholesale photocopying. Michael Cass of Longman: "I'm a hardliner. I'd prosecute. I wouldn't like to guess at the sales we lose this way. Tens of thousands of pounds. Some schools are quite open about it."

German educational publishers, financially beleaguered (and in some cases going bankrupt) just like their British counterparts, are currently trying to persuade the Bundestag to give them

effective constitutional protection. They point to the dangers inherent in the view - held by some local authorities - that copying for educational purposes should not be illegal. What publisher, they ask, will be able to afford to produce a new atlas if the law encourages each school to buy just one copy? As the managing director of one firm declared last week to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, if the Government don't act soon "in 10 to 15 years there won't be any educational publishers left".

Piracy's other face - cheap editions printed on offset machines and widely sold in the Third World - has galvanized the British Publishers Association into setting up an international campaign with its own Anti Piracy Officer. Pirate sales, particularly of academic books on medicine, agriculture and finance, have recently increased much faster than sales of their "legitimate" counterparts: the publishers' fear is fuelled by the present scale of the problem than by its likely scale in the future.

One scheme in particular represents a lower-key, constructive response to the problem: the British Council's English Language Book Society offers low-priced editions of academic books with the aid of a grant from the ODA. Print-runs of 50,000 are common for these books aimed directly at students rather than at librarians. The scheme is politically useful, it reduces the incentives to piracy, and it opens up new markets for British publishers. The only trouble is its scale - the grant is a mere £1.2 million.

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Pinckon of John Murray, a veteran of such operations, was this year wrestling with a different problem. He wanted to publish a science book for 12-year-olds by a well-known Dutch author; Dutch and German publishers were already committed to it, but Murray could only join in if they could find either a book club or an American house whose added print-orders would bring the price down to the right level.

Bologna is of course the principal place where the inhabitants of the children's book world gather to exchange their wares, but Frankfurt plays its part. Last week Hamish Hamilton were proudly touting their latest royal school, *Stories for a Prince*, 14 tales written by children for Prince William and culled from a national sponsored competition (the proceeds of which have already gone into the deserving coffers of the RNIB). Princess Diana was due to be presented with the book the day before yesterday: now the review copies can go out, together with the paperback version of Prince Charles's *The Old Man of Lochnagar*. No files on Hamish Hamilton.

Kingfisher Books were happily showing off the dummy of a charming and unusual publication, *Christine's Picture Book*, the facsimile of an illustrated book handmade by Hans Christian Andersen and a friend for the friend's granddaughter. Kingfisher, who won a *TES* Information Book Award last year, were one of a number of British firms doing good business at Frankfurt thanks to a knack which strongly impresses European publishers - that of making books which schools and shops are equally keen to buy.

In the Argentinian section the first thing that caught my eye was John Wain's *Zona libre*. The wrapper round it said, "El mundo adolescente... Una exploración aguda y comovedora". Yes, John Wain's novel *Young Shoulders*, which won a Whitbread Award last autumn, is now on sale in paperback in Buenos Aires. Another reassuring sign: *We like English - reading and workbook*, on an adjacent shelf. Good. Then Jean Rhys, Robert K Massie, and a Mickey Mouse cookbook. *Las recetas preferidas de Mickey y sus amigos*. The man on the HMSO stand said he could not keep pace with foreign publishers' demands for books about the Falklands (or for antique tank manuals for that matter). In the Argentinian section, that particular butcher seemed well and truly bored.

foam that garnishes "strawberry delight".

At one tatty inter-war suburban primary, once the pride of the borough, the head controls activities through a series of hand bells, each the preserve of a chosen monitor. The classrooms, in this "bungalow school", lead off a central assembly hall, and the row of bells stands ready on a shelf by the trophies.

A large clanging one is for fire (and fire practices); another with a more lugubrious dong warns of dinner; and smaller brass one signals playtime (and its end); while a dainty silver one is reserved as the "scripture" bell. Its tinkling sound says time for everybody to put away *Beta Maths*, *Ladybird* readers and the "Transport through the ages" project, and to devote themselves to higher things.

Keeping up with the times is also popular with heads. Classrooms are enriched with micros, VDUs, disc drives, video gear - not all fully understood or used. The pupils at Cairnwood are used to their own special purposes, while staff complain that their stockrooms are deprived of essentials. "All that fancy

elsewhere I know of a stock-room filled with foil milk bottle-tops - all carefully washed, flattened and packed tightly into plastic bags - for blind dogs, the infants said.

Another head snarcs any visitor in the entrance foyer and delivers an insistent monologue of woes/opinions for so long that one never actually gets to see the school. I find this particularly irksome, but fortunately I have got to know his rather more understanding schoolkeeper. "Don't you worry, squice, it's always like it. Come in round the back and through the kitchen - everyone else does... and I'll slip you straight into the classroom."

Other heads achieve local fame/notoriety by passionate devotion to little handwriting, registers, good cases like *Qafam*, Task Force or *Christian Aid* (in my childhood it was National Savings) whereas others go to great lengths to prevent "waste" and hover round the "piggy bin" at dinner time. Heaven help any infant (or more cunning junior) who tries to slip in the odd blob of Smash or the pink shaving



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ARTS

For the love of Albert

Albert: His Life and Work.
Royal College of Art, Kensington
Gore, London SW7. Until January 22.

He was sexually attractive—at least his wife found him so, and he fathered seven children—and he was intellectually adventurous. Painter, draftsman, architect, etcher, musician, economist, bureaucrat, farmer, one of the most enlightened collectors and patrons of art whom England has known, he was largely responsible for influencing the whole course of taste and design in this country. Chancellor of Cambridge University, and a Field Marshal in the British Army, his interest in the improvement of the clothing, weapons, training and education of that moribund institution rendered it invaluable service. Hated by many, adored by some, he was commemorated on his death, at the age of 42, by the most distinctive monument in the metropolis. On that occasion Disraeli, not always the most objective of commentators where royal flattery was concerned, said of Albert Francis Charles Augustus Emmanuel, Prince-Consort of England, "This German prince has governed England for 21 years with a wisdom and energy such as none of our kings have ever shown". His wife, usually unreservedly devoted, had occasional moments of criticism: "Papa has his faults too. He is often very trying in his hushness and overlove of business."

Some idea of this "overlove of business" comes through from the mammoth, claustrophobic, overpacked, overdesigned and utterly fascinating exhibition now taking place in the somewhat stifled exhibition space of the Royal College of Art in Kensington and each demanding a protracted and minute investigation, which tends to inhibit the free flow of assiduous spectators. In addition to all this,



The future Edward VII and his sister, the future Empress of Germany, by Queen Victoria, etched by Prince Albert

(significantly the exhibition is sponsored by *The Observer* and the Midland Bank) there is a shop attached to the exhibition which sells a bewildering variety of objects with sometimes vague Albertian connexions, after-shaving lotion, mugs, rock, the lot. A host of attendant attractions include carol concerts, Victorian auctions, Albert lectures, and Victorian weekends with five course breakfasts, an "Albert" cocktail, and, blatant exercise in sexism, an extra night free if your name is Albert (but not Victoria or even Albertina). South London will also be proliferating in related activities; a Victorian market day at Greenwich, a Victorian carol service given by Friends of the National Maritime Museum (I), a "Golden Oldies" football match at Blackheath, and "A Soirée for Prince Albert" at Kidbrooke House—"participants encouraged to wear Victorian dress", as well as guided walks through the Prince's life and achievement.

Overkill? Too much razzmatazz? Perhaps, but even though the Royal College exhibition gives the impression at times as though the contents of

some Victorian attic had been dumped on Mr Gulbenkian's floor, that is no bad thing. The contents of attics are always interesting, and that of the Victorian royals especially so. Albert was a remarkable and an interesting man, and the exhibition captures, in a way that a more pretentious one would not have done, something of his personality and of his achievement, even though it may have been pushing it a bit to have included statues by Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth just because they were once students at the Royal College of Art.

For those who cannot make the pilgrimage to Kensington Gore, there is an admirable substitute. Hermione Hobhouse, that redoubtable propagandist of things Victorian, has produced a book, *Prince Albert: His Life and Work*, (Hamish Hamilton £10.95; £3.50 paperback, available at the exhibition) which is perspicacious, well-illustrated, scholarly, and, as a guide to the life and achievement of Albert, the God, as he rather unfortunately came to be known. Goodness is not a quality the British relish in their rulers.

Bernard Denvir

Bernard Denvir

Twin odysseys

Measure for Measure.
Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon.
Volpone. By Ben Jonson.
The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Measure for Measure is a complex play and Adrian Noble is a director who flourishes among complicated ideas and dense characterizations, refusing to adopt an easy overview of a piece and allowing the craze of thoughts and feelings to settle like fragments in a mosaic. Of course it's an approach that works only with the richest of texts, and in my book *Measure* is certainly that.

A feature of the performances Noble tenses from actors is a clear presentation of how well or little a character knows him or herself, how far self-delusion is innocent, admitted or even calculated. I'm thinking in particular of Michael Gambon's Anthony and Cheryl Campbell's Nora. The emphasis in this *Measure* is firmly on the Duke and Isabella, undergoing twin odysseys through the courts, prisons and stews of Vienna, discovering their worlds and themselves. The Duke's "wisdom" and Isabella's "virtue" are held up to the light.

A moment's examination of the plot reveals the Duke as a rotten administrator, a lousy judge of character and a weak and vain executive ducking the responsibility of enforcing his own laws. Yet, his muddling and meddling, for all the outrageous moral contradictions, will result—in this, just a comedy—in the reassertion of a human justice, apparently as yielding as a flexicurve, but ultimately immutable and good.

A decision has to be taken about Isabella's attitude to the church. (The giveaway is her wanting the Poor Clares' privations to be even stricter.) Juliet Stevenson's Isabella is partially in flight from the world, grishly in love with chastity, lured by a life of learning, devotion and seclusion. Humility, however, will definitely be a problem. But she's too practical and adventurous for the nunish phase to

last. Anger, energy and enthusiasm take over. Juliet Stevenson is one of those rare actors capable of both gravity and passion, of intellectual and emotional logic. Isabella is ideally suited to her gifts. Daniel Massey, strength, like hers, is one of explanation. Neither may greatly move audiences, but they can certainly make us understand. A word too for Richard O'Callaghan's fantastic and diseased Lucio, Anthony O'Donnell's put-up Pompey and Oliver Ford Davies' Provost.

Ilona Sekacz's music is a brilliant evocation of the concerns of the play. Her ornate mock-baroque masses are so riddled with suspensions that the very order and formality of the music results in permanent harmonic tension, a creaking perfection amplified by the use of the sickly sweetness of boys' voices about to break, in an asexual and curiously erotic. It's a masterly aural image.

Volpone is also in the business of juggling with moral perceptions. As with *Macbeth* and *Richard III*, we coast along with the bad guys until they go too far and we hotfoot back across the ethical divide and smugly enjoy the come-uppance of our surrogates.

Bill Alexander's production is consistently inventive and enjoyable. (A nearly four hours, it has to be.) Richard Griffiths's fox exerts a gap-toothed charm, earning our sympathy by patently glorifying "more in the country purchase... than the glad possession of his wealth and finding the laughs by playing straight down the line, slowly, firmly and truly.

The show is packed with excellent performances, rooted, in Jonson's fashion, in a single desire. John Dili (Corvino) brings an equally bagged obsessiveness to imitating and being imitated by his wife; James Fleet (Periphetes) by emulating the audience in his own amazed disbelief at Sir Politic, succeeds in making the straight man funny, and Henry Goodman, with his Volpone, adds another accomplished creation to an already versatile season.

Jill Burrows



Abel Gance's epic masterpiece *Napoleon* is to be screened on Channel 4 next weekend (Saturday November 5, 1.45–5.05pm; Sunday November 6, 1.45–4.30pm). Only six months after the premiere in 1927, Abel Gance's film was consigned to the scrapheap when *The Jazz Singer* ended the silent era. Thanks to the work of film historian Kevin Brownlow and composer Carl Davis, modern audiences can enjoy his genius. Above, Napoleon as a boy (Wladimir Roudnitsky).

Marching on

The Walking Class.
Birmingham Youth Theatre.
Midlands Arts Centre.

Playwright Roy Mitchell, an ex-member of the Birmingham Youth Theatre, was commissioned to write BYT's production for the Birmingham Theatre Festival, a month-long festival of productions and workshops aimed at encouraging new writing for the theatre.

The *Walking Class*, with its setting of a right-to-work march, gives the young, 25-strong cast familiar territory to work on and dialogue, ideas and conflicts close to their daily experience. This gives a general level of confidence to the acting and a few of

the more seasoned members of the cast develop aspects of character beyond their own personalities: Andrew Bonnan as the loudy irrepressible Bonnan, Andrew Goodman as the trouble-making Albion, and Darren Lee as the embryonic political agitator, Michael.

At the centre, Mitchell places his most interesting character, Nigel (Paul Dixon), a likeable, intelligent sixth-former who can't resist making a fortune out of his own personal predicament—being friends' and capital even out of teaching them a tough but important lesson about "crusades": everyone is in them for different reasons.

And FitzGerald

ARTS

Black season

Nevis Mountain Dew.
Theatre (and on tour).
Every Inch A Lady.
Donmar Warehouse Theatre.
Two Pieces Of Ivory.
Concourse Theatre (and on tour).
Little Shop Of Horrors.
Concourse Theatre.
The Cherry Orchard.
Revue Royal, Haymarket.
Mad.
Trickster Theatre Company.

As you read this *Nevis Mountain Dew* has left the Arts Theatre for its company's usual stamping grounds in Brompton and North Paddington. The opening shot in a GLC-funded Black Theatre Season, it exploded with all the force of a defective pop-gun badly aimed: the kind of play and acting that trades the idea of Black Theatre from the outside.

So in New York (1954) Steve Carter's play is a distant echo of *Who's Life Is It Anyway?* Jared is in an awing and the central focus of forty years. His sister Everelda reveals his wife Billie, being disgusted by the set she gives Jared. The consumption of a bottle of "the magical Nevis Mountain Dew" acts as a kind of truth drug which leads to Jared's death. Why flipped the switch on the iron-lap? Does anyone care? No, because nothing presented suggests even a suspicion of connection with real people in real life situations.

The one black American in the company (Guy Gregory) shows up the acting of the largely West-Indian cast to pass themselves off as African Blacks. His easy style shows off their edgy "pointed" acting. The

design, lighting and direction (Rufus Collins, an American who should know better) are uniformly bad. Sad to see good actresses like Mona Hammond and Nadia Cattouse so badly served.

What is "Black Theatre"? Plays by black writers about black people performed by black actors? For whom? For black audiences? Where are they? White theatre (in the same terms) is a minority interest despite a long cultural history of theatre art and many efforts to widen its appeal. Is Black Theatre ghetto drama aimed at a minority within a minority, moreover a minority for whom White Theatre expresses an alien culture? Can white-trained black actors (geniuses expected) be any more than white actors with black skins? Such questions (and more) are thrown up by the disappointing debacle of *Nevis Mountain Dew*. That there is black theatre I am sure, convinced by black performers I have seen in the US and here. Bertice Reading in *Every Inch A Lady* demonstrates it superbly single-handed. Hers is a powerful, passionate voice. Jane Austen's is a whisper by comparison, but no less enjoyable in the enchanting *Two Pieces Of Ivory*—presented by Geraldine McEwan directed by Richard Digby Day. McEwan is a definitive "Miss Bates": utterly charming.

Thumbs up for *Little Shop Of Horrors*—hilariously gruesome fun. Squeamish and nervous kids might have nightmares after seeing it, but little toughies, horror-film addicts, 1940's and 50's nostalgics and anyone who enjoys musicals with a zip will rush to see it. Re-working Faust (not to say Matt. 4), Seymour sacrifices his

soul to the "Audrey plant" which is bent on taking over the world and starts by taking over the Comedy Theatre. It has a wonderful close-harmony trio named Chiffon, Crystal and Ronnette, and super performances from Barry James (Seymour), Terence Hillier and the amazing Ellen Greene.

The Cherry Orchard, directed by Lindsay Anderson, is much less exciting. It is decently done, not unentertaining, but it does not gel. There is a parade of cameo parts but no ensemble work to speak of. With the exception of Bill Fraser's Pischik—the only character with a life off-stage as well as on—everything happens on the surface: there are no deep currents, no felt passions, no resonances. Joan Plover's Ranevskaya disappointingly shows no feeling for the house, the orchard, the living—only for her dead son. She is moving about him, but the rest is only acting. Pischik's farewell to Ranevskaya is pure truth, acting to break the heart. If only the rest could match its spirit.

A spirit of enquiry, daring, adventure shines through *Manu*, written and directed by Nigel Jamieson for the Trickster Theatre Company collective. Pushing wider the frontiers of mime-drama, it chronicles the rise and fall of a people, using mime, dance, acrobatics, masks and martial arts as expression. Too much time is devoted to reproducing (very well) age behaviour, and the story-line needs clearer focus and a more definite end. It is on tour, and well worth seeing.

John James



"Peace, Love and Faith", sometimes captioned "The Three Sisters" (1868), from a book by Margaret Harker about the "eccentric" Victorian photographer, Julia Margaret Cameron, whose work is featured in Collins' new series *The Great Photographers* (Ilmpack, £3.95 each). Other titles currently available: Cecil Beaton, by Philippe Garner; Ernst Hass, by Bryn Campbell; Donald McCullin by Mark Haworth-Booth. With the amateur photographer in mind, Collins also publishes a useful series called *You and Your Camera*, with clear, colourful diagrams, and practical hints from the experts. The latest titles are *Black & White Developing and Printing*, consultant editor Neville Maude and *Improve Your SLR Photography* by David Kilpatrick (£3.95 each).

Whaling

The Boy Who Talked To Whales.
London Theatre, London, until November 13.

It's always a little wary of Eco-drama for children, if only because of its tendency to be condescending. Franchising to the children of the converted, you could call it.

US writer Webster Smalley's play between eleven-year-olds avoids this pitfall because the story is strong and the Union's production standard is high. The play bears a striking resemblance to the film *The Day of the Dolphin*, where dolphins were the heroes and men the villains, except that in this case the central sympathetic human character is not a gruff marine biologist but a confused little boy.

No wonder does Jerry, energetically played by David Bradshaw, find out how to communicate with Ooka, a whale, by means of trumpet, a plastic pipe, then the whistle, a strengthened, first with extinction by the local whale hunter and then by military exploitation by the US Navy. I always thought that the George C. Scott film was far-fetched for adults, and at first, *The Boy Who Talked To Whales* looked suspiciously like an imitation.

Nevertheless, though, our hero and his friend Meg played with magnetic conviction by Vicky Lickorish) devise a plan where the whales can be taught to defend themselves against human attack, as well as making continued whaling impossible. "All boats with guns look like whaling boats to whales," explains Jerry to a bemused audience, as half the world's naval forces come under attack by sabotaging sperm whales. Perhaps Webster's play got a little carried away with dolphins, but after all, it is for children!

N.B.

Competition

There is still time to enter for the International Student Playscript Competition. Any student, full or part time, makes to submit a script should apply to the entry form and details to Clive Hill, London, N10 2AU (01-883 4384). The closing date for entries is November 30 and the final judge will be the jury.

Write advice

Primary Sauce. Edited by David Sulkin.
Royal Court Young People's Theatre Scheme £1.70, 0946303 01 0. (£1.35 for school orders of 10 and over, inc. p&p.)

The annual Royal Court Theatre Young Writers' Festival is 10 years old this year and to celebrate, David Sulkin, the scheme's director, has put together a compendium of plays written by 10 to 16-year-olds, which were professionally produced and performed at last year's festival.

The plays themselves are very readable, despite some problems with length and a predictable lack of polish. *Free Credits* is a fresh piece of writing about three young space-invader addicts and their minor brush with the law when they try and cheat a machine in an amusement arcade. The very short *Don't Leave Me Shadow* turns out to be an impressionistic description of regaining consciousness after an anaesthetic at the dentist. *I Wanna Be a Brain Surgeon* is a simple piece about two unemployed school-leavers and their differing attitudes to job hunting.

Nick Baker

Piano man

Franz Liszt, Volume 1: The Virtuoso Years 1811–1847. By Alan Walker.
Faber and Faber £25. 0 571 10568 8.

The reality of Liszt's life was spectacular enough, yet his biographers have been unable to resist adding embellishments: extra mistresses and illegitimate children, a spurious noble pedigree. Liszt was the nineteenth century's superstar and had to pay the price. Hero worship went hand in hand with envious gossip, and the resultant distortions linger on. It needed a diligent, level-headed researcher like Alan Walker to sort out fact from fantasy. Professor Walker is not without his own bias: he regards Liszt as "the central figure in the Romantic century (Berlioz and Wagner notwithstanding)", which will always be a contentious opinion and will need a lot of hard argument to sustain when he comes to deal with the bulk of Liszt's compositions in Volume 2.

David Matthews

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CWN

Next week

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Music Department,
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Old love

Romeo and Juliet.
Shrewsbury School

Peter Fanning and Peter Broad chose to set this production in about 1900, the better to illuminate the social tensions which pervade the play. In the end though, their purpose was confounded, by their own skill, for the acting and direction were capable of achieving the highest degree of intelligibility quite unaided.

This was a stylish and well paced production. The difficult shifts of mood were handled with deceptive ease and we were always aware of the underlying gnawing neuroticism of the hopelessly doomed, tangle of relationships.

Sarah-Jane Archer, as Juliet, achieved the feat of being both virginal and lustuous—thus accounting with more than usual accuracy for Romeo's transcendental infatuation. Alastair Bull exactly caught the tortured helplessness of her lover, and Gerald Dutton's Friar was always magnetic and all the better for the occasional touch of hyst. Fiona Mitchell's nurse was refreshingly unisatirical as well as being faintly and pleasingly reminiscent of Sybil Fawcett. Of Tony Hobson's mastery and assertive Mercutio, suffice it to say that after his death scene—where stylistic risks were taken to good effect—the feeling of loss reached out to engulf the audience. We all, quite simply, wanted him back. All performances though, were sturdy and confident. From Ben Dunwell's nicely victimized Peter to the sit-up-and-pay-attention authority of Jerry Renkes-Williams as the nurse.

New music composed and directed by Deny Lyster and performed by an accomplished ensemble did much to sustain the atmosphere of the piece.

Gerald Haigh

Shaw way

The Devil's Disciple.
Birmingham Rep.

There's a weightiness to Clive Perry's production of *The Devil's Disciple* which is at odds with the style of the play itself. Shaw cooks a snooty puritanism and, in his satire of the melodrama, at puritanism's close relative, earnest credulity. This satirical element is largely missing from the Rep production where introductory prologues to each act, culled from Shaw's preface and stage directions (delivered by David Beale as GBS himself) and detailed, naturalistic sets and costumes from Geoffrey Scott, construct a framework which tempts the actors to enter fully into the fictional world of the play. But Shaw demands a detachment from the character, a touch of artifice which recognizes that any seriousness in the play lies in the words, not the emotions, and that the characters are therefore one-dimensional.

Only Lewis Flander as Dick Dudgeon and Jeffrey Wickham as General Burgoyne found this playing level, and the courtroom scene which brings them both together sparkles with wit. At other times the production swings uneasily between sombre naturalism and farce.

School and college students get an opportunity to consider such points at the Rep's Play Day on November 10 when they can listen to, and question the director and other members of the production team at the morning workshop sessions, followed by a 2.30 pm performance of the play.

AF

The owner of The Cheat House, referred to last week's TES wishes to point out that he did not say that Anita men were afraid of their women, as reported in the article. A Cheat to Re-enter them. We apologise for this error.

BOOKS

DATA

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Ian Morrison is a lecturer in Edinburgh
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Quiet,
organic,
but radical

Mary Hoffman talks
to the author of
'Individualised
Reading'



Towards the end of 1973, I was at a London seminar on sexism in education when a young teacher electrified the primary discussion group by telling us that the reading scheme would be dead within a decade. That was Cliff Moon, an energetic deputy-head in Somerset, who earlier that year had brought out an unpretentious little pamphlet called *Individualised Reading*. Ten years have passed, *Individualised Reading* has gone into a fifteenth edition and totalled 57,000 in sales, but there seems to be life in the reading scheme yet.

"Yes, well," says Cliff, "Things move slowly in education," but he is still quite confident in his prophecy. His ideas and his system are wonderfully simple. The pamphlet, updated at least once a year, still only costs 70p and is written in a clear and straightforward manner. After an introduction setting out the criteria for including books - everything from type-size to cultural stereotypes - there follow 17 pages of currently available titles. All, whether fiction or non-fiction, individual books or series, are assigned to a stage from 0 (few or no words) to 13 (eg Asterix or "Young Engineers"). These stages are definitely not intended to represent that old yoke-fellow of the reading scheme, the "reading age".

The level any reader is at can be established by a series of questions on the book. If those are read with an

error-rate of 5 per cent or less, that stage is the appropriate one. Each stage represents about six months in a child's reading development and Cliff points out that any child will sometimes want to read something more difficult - up to four stages ahead of their normal competence - and equally sometimes want to back-track a stage or two. Just like most adult readers in fact.

Cliff Moon receives virtually everything that's published for younger readers - though he wishes he could see more of it before it hardens into print. When the bulk and quality of *Individualised Reading* is brought out, which is why there are sometimes two a year. Cliff estimates that he rejects about 50 per cent of what he is sent as failing to meet one or more of his selection criteria. The lists include more series than individual books and indeed feature many reading schemes, including *Reading 360* (Ginn), *1, 2, 3 and Away* (Hart-Davis), *Sparks* (Blackie) and *Story Chest* (E J Arnold).

Is this just a sop to a habit that teachers find difficult to break? "Only the best books of schemes are included," says Cliff Moon, "and yet I still sometimes get letters saying 'Why have you put that terrible book in?'". If we get several like that out of the next edition, we'll be changing all the time.

Another reason for their inclusion

may be that reading schemes are improving. Betty Root, Tutor-in-Charge of the Centre which publishes *Individualised Reading*, thinks that Cliff Moon's work has made education publishers aware of teacher-criticisms and dissatisfactions and has forced up the quality of their output. "More than half of what we've got in the Reading Centre now is worth reading," she says cheerfully. (The Centre, unlike Cliff Moon, is not selective.)

His own dissatisfaction with educational publishing began when, as a new deputy head of a primary school, he was given responsibility for replacing the core reading-scheme. "The Ladybird books were wearing out but I found that the children who had used them tended to think: 'I've done that now'. They could read, at least they could read those books, but they never got the habit. That school never did get a new reading scheme. Cliff and a group of teachers spent one afternoon a week assessing books and running off banda sheets of lists. Within a year, the volume was getting out of hand and Bridie Raban - a colleague who has since collaborated with Cliff Moon on many educational projects - suggested getting them published by the Reading Centre. As Betty Root says, "It's not the kind of thing and ordinary educational publisher would have undertaken". Then, as now, the method of assessment was not the application of readability formulae, but the lengthier process of trial and error with children themselves.

For the last seven or eight years, Cliff's wife, Bernice Moon, has done a lot of the assessment. An experienced remedial teacher and educational writer herself, she spends about one week a month in schools establishing the appropriate *Individualised Reading* stage for all the new books that come in. But if the Moons get it wrong, teachers soon let them know, which is what they want. The lists are intended as a base-line for teachers to add to and discard from.

The large sales figures of the pamphlet don't mean that nearly 60,000 teachers have abandoned reading schemes. Margaret Week, of the London Institute of Education, says, "It's a very important tool for teachers who

want not to use a reading scheme but can't quite give it up. It's eclectic and lets them devise their own scheme. And of course, those who want to use a scheme still can. Betty Root thinks that the strength of *Individualised Reading* is its flexibility. "It doesn't threaten teachers with an either/or. And however it's used, it's going to broaden children's experience of books."

The influence of *Individualised Reading* on the teachers who use it is far-reaching. Peter Brinton, Deputy Head of St Columba Minor Primary School near Newquay, introduced it into the school two years ago. "We five-year-olds go off to the library to choose their own books. All the books are colour-coded according to Cliff Moon's method. It's a bit like having an informed teacher present there. Peter Brinton believes the main benefit of this approach for teachers is the improvement in their self-confidence. And for children? "They are now reading books that are the result of author-inspiration, rather than something commissioned by an educational publisher for a reading scheme."

Many of the people I talked to about *Individualised Reading* used expressions like "revolutionary" and "treated into many schools". Cliff Moon's ideas are radical enough, but his approach is based on hard work and an indefatigable dedication to better books for children. He is Senior Lecturer in the Teaching of Reading at Brunel College of Higher Education - a taxing job in itself - yet his personal publications and current educational commitments would fill another article. If *Individualised Reading* has caused a revolution in the way children are being taught to read, it has been quiet, organic one, for which teachers were ready. There is less of the bulldozer and more of the earthworm about Cliff Moon's methods, yet there can be no doubt that he has shifted a lot of ground in the last 10 years.

Individualised Reading by Bernice Moon is published by The Centre for the Teaching of Reading, School of Education, University of Reading, 29, Eastern Avenue, Reading, RG1 5RU, price 70p plus 2p postage.

Namesake

Our Names, Our Selves, by Mary Laslett.
Heinemann £7.95. 434 0410 1.

What's in a name? Would we regard Juliet differently if she had been called Bertha? Probably we would, according to this book.

In an experiment quoted, where teachers were given identical essays to mark which were assigned to previously established popular and unpopular names for boys and girls, the grades awarded reflected a favourable bias towards Davids and Lisas and a low regard for Huberts and Berthas. Also, children with "favoured" first names had more positive self-concepts and higher school achievement scores than children with "undesirable" names.

There would appear to be potential hazards in having a name not chosen from the "boring central pool of Johns and Marys, which have remained socially static for centuries". Names are "highly explosive material", revealing all sorts of information about class, race and status. Most first names, it would seem, slide down towards socially (Emma, Jason); although a few names travel in the other direction - often names (like Sarah and Daniel) fashionable again in Britain in the eighties are Biblical ones widely popular among servants in Victorian times.

And people (including the Chomskys) feel strongly about how their names are pronounced and spell, for there is a deep connection between name and identity. The patriarchal system of inherited surnames, social pressures relating to name-change on marriage, so-called "court" titles, "given" and "taken" names, the "management" of one's name - these are only some of the topics discussed in this thought-provoking and very entertaining introduction to names.

Richard Evans
Bridget Loney



Bruins' lib

Taking a wicked furry swipe at theories of creation (Was God a Sewing Machine?), ropping in the monogamous goddess herself (Jane Panda's Work-reverse of the coin (Battered Bears), Bridget Herdridge exposes current fashions to hilarious effect in *Every Bear's Life* (Ebury Press £3.95. 8 5225 346 4). For males there is *Pumping Ruff* for all those who believe the teddy bear to be the most important toy in the house. This book will be a delight.

Betty Tadmor

Powys power

The highly charged and flamboyant mysticism of the novelist and sage John Cowper Powys is given unique rein in two slim volumes of his letters, *Letters to Eric the Red*, edited by Cedric Hentschel and Blackmore. Knight, edited by Robert Blackmore. Names, the "open alias" (such as a pen name), the "management" of one's name - these are only some of the topics discussed in this thought-provoking and very entertaining introduction to names.

R Christensen

BOOKS

Children's literature

Dark and
devilish
deeds

The Devil's Door-bell, By Anthony Horowitz.
Patrick Hardy £4.95 0 7444 0007 4
The Devil, By Robert Taylor.
Anderson Press £4.95 0 86264 040 7
Halloween at Mill Lane, By Ken Radford.
John Goodchild £5.95. 0 903445 73 5
The Werewolf Mask, By Kenneth Tredwell.
Hodder and Stoughton £4.95. 0 340 26328 9.

Devon of the Dark, By Terrance Dicks.
Blackie £5.95. 0 216 91360 8.

The traditions of Halloween include divination of the future as well as reversion from the past, and, by the same token, Gothic tales for the same years of childhood often face the child the primal curse, historic doom, and forwards to traffic accidents, nuclear explosions and other menacing forms of technological mastery.

Heaven knows, there are plenty of horrors, ancient and modern, to choose from, and the most prodigious of these authors, Anthony Horowitz, owns a wild profusion of them into *The Devil's Doorbell*. Martin Hopkins is just 13 when both his parents are killed and a cruel foster-mother takes him from London to a decaying Yorkshire village where Black Mass is to be celebrated in a disused nuclear power station. The twentieth century had been forced into an unholy marriage with the Dark Ages. The intended victim escapes the sacrificial rites and the mushroom cloud turns out to be reversible, but only the convulsive hope of successive death-throes keeps the yarn going. A labourer falls into farm machinery; live loads are moved over an open fire; phantom apparitions with burning petrol; a witch dreams in radioactive acid. By way of light relief, a pig commits suicide.

Any plot would sink under the weight of so much gushing blood, peeling flesh, and splintered bone; the vocabulary of carnage is muddled, repetitive, banal. Nevertheless, Martin's vivid illustrations are an intrinsic difficulty of the genre. In order to chill parents, the odds against the hero seem overwhelming, a confirmation of our worst fears. Yet who would wish to identify for long with a loser, a poor beleaguered weakling, bereft of family and friends, who is helplessly vulnerable to the antagonist must regard into a source of strength, with the discovery of psychic gifts (as in Martin's case) or some other endowment that is more than a match for the enemy.

When Kelly Jowen ventures into rural Wales, temporarily orphaned by her parents' departure for America, she is perplexed by the language, teased at school, and initially cold-shouldered by her crippled aunt. "The Devil" of Robert Taylor's title comes to her rescue: a white-haired wizard, visible only to children in trouble, who consoles them with such magic benefits as a singing voice to beat all comers at the Eldestodd. Kelly gets a puppy and a bike, as well as affectionate reassurances from her relatives, while the sorcerer, who casts spells like a senior social worker - "Remember, I am here to help" - releases her class-mate from a coma following concussion, and takes the local tearaway, battered Jimmy Jones, to be his apprentice. All ends happily, with the safe return of Mum and Dad, as befits an adventure in which the youngsters are, to judge from the accompanying line-drawings, very young indeed.

Haunting at Mill Lane by Ken Radford is also set in Wales: hence the topographical detail of South Gower, and the abundance of hot broth and fresh-baked bread, to furnish earnestness with cosiness, the stark with the snug. After her mother's death, 12-year-old Sarah travels to the home of Aunt Liza and Uncle Jim, where memories of the past - old books, clothes, toys and pictures in a wooden chest - recall the forgotten fate of a former inhabitant, tormented by a pitiless stepmother. Sally-Ann's ghost is driven from the cottage by a Reverend exorcist, but only when a dream enables Sarah to identify the murdered girl's grave and get it sanctified, can the unquiet spirit be laid to rest.

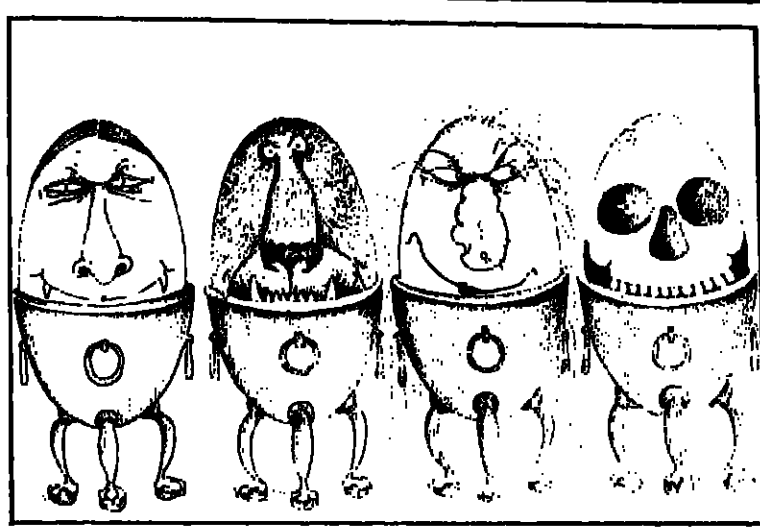
Although Sarah roams endlessly over the moors with Romany Robbie and even journeys back into days of yore, the pace is sluggish to the point of stagnation. Hearts are heavy, minds absent. Everyone lingers, ponders or muses in the dew or the dusk. As in those anguished child-portraits on sale in department stores, great attention is lavished on the heroine's tear-filled eyes: "like dewdrops on bluebell" curls one lady observes. Spun-gold curls command equal admiration from old Peg the gypsy who broods over the smouldering embers beside her caravan tending the fire so listlessly that it falls to burn the sinister rag-doll which is at the bottom of the trouble: "I'm thinking that somewhere, deep in my breast, a heart-beat is a-murmuring."

Marion Glastonbury

Flora and fauna in season

The Book of the Year, By J Burton, R Burton and K. Taylor.
Warne £10.95. 0 7232 2997 X.
The Young Naturalist, By Neil Arnold.
Weir Lock £3.95. 0 7063 6219 5.

Warne's *Book of the Year* is one which will certainly interest those with more than just a temporary passion for the wonders of living things. The authors have organized their information into two main chapters, each devoted to a different aspect of the natural world, within which are a series of self-contained double-page spreads. These are: 1. The natural world, some of which is in terms of a broad perspective, such as ecology, or more specifically, in a study of carnivorous plants. On some pages there are photographs of plants containing snip-pets of information which serve to



X-certificate hard-boiled eggs, drawn by Babette Cole, are one of the weird and wonderful ideas in *Hocus Focis* compiled by Lesley Young (Hamish Hamilton £4.95). There are recipes, superstitions, stories, poems - all suitable for Halloween.

her parents' departure for America, she is perplexed by the language, teased at school, and initially cold-shouldered by her crippled aunt. "The Devil" of Robert Taylor's title comes to her rescue: a white-haired wizard, visible only to children in trouble, who consoles them with such magic benefits as a singing voice to beat all comers at the Eldestodd. Kelly gets a puppy and a bike, as well as affectionate reassurances from her relatives, while the sorcerer, who casts spells like a senior social worker - "Remember, I am here to help" - releases her class-mate from a coma following concussion, and takes the local tearaway, battered Jimmy Jones, to be his apprentice. All ends happily, with the safe return of Mum and Dad, as befits an adventure in which the youngsters are, to judge from the accompanying line-drawings, very young indeed.

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Marion Glastonbury

Each chapter has an introductory which broadly describes its biological and meteorological characteristics and the endpapers contain a calendar chart summarizing the activities of various organisms in different months. While this book would certainly make an excellent Christmas or birthday present, from the teacher's point of view its value lies particularly in its potential for stimulating the interest of older children and in providing basic information on selected subjects. Used with other texts, under the guidance of a skilled teacher, it could open the door to a prolonged interest in natural history.

Neil Arnold is a primary school teacher and his selection is especially suitable for children around the middle school age group. The text concentrates on birds, mammals, butterflies and moths, having an emphasis on observation and habitat. Two short

How I longed for it to stop.

From sentimental reverie to business-like dismemberment. In the eight stories of Kenneth Ireland's collection, *The Werewolf Mask*, there are at least a dozen corpses, and the coup de grace is usually delivered in the culminating paragraph. To prevent the reader from becoming attached to these potential stiffs, most are rendered flat or dislikeable from the start. Ian, for instance, calmly watches the severed head of his least favourite uncle roll along the carpet. Women rarely appear, though there is a female vampire, a haunted house which projects the owner's daughter into the future as a wraith, and a grasping Granny who, having poisoned her granddaughter, sips coffee which Lucinda has previously laced with the same herbicide.

The title-story comes first and the later fictions depend less on the stab of gory fangs than on the intricacies of ingenious plots; even, in the case of "Deadly Creature" and "Body Changer", on a glimmer of psychological insight. Authentic desires and forebodings may arguably be discerned in accounts of a boy whose guardian-monster annihilates his opponents, and another who is preyed upon by an old man seeking to appropriate his strength.

Probably the best of this gruesome bunch is *Devon of the Dark* by Terrance Dicks, a former script-editor of the "Doctor Who" series, who brings a brisk irreverent professionalism to the task of giving us the creeps. A property tycoon takes over a City office block for redevelopment, heedless of its historic notoriety, and unaware of the Mithraic malignity that lurks beneath. The ensuing upheaval is suavely sorted out by the modest brilliance of young Tom Seaweed, with the help of a co-conspirator and a show-biz professor, and assorted archaeological diggers. Some readers may be repelled by our hero's lofty condescension to his mother (not to mention the stoning of a witch in Ptericoat Lane). But, after a surfeit of child-abuse in all the foregoing books, it's refreshing to see youth in the ascendant and the older generation put in its place: "You only had to listen to 'Today in Parliament' to realize just how childish adults could be."

Marion Glastonbury

Flights of fact

How Birds Work, By Ron Freethy.
Blandford £8.95. 0 7137 11566.

Ron Freethy, a biology teacher and ornithological lecturer, has added personal style and relevant examples to an impressive amount of zoological fact. Not that *How Birds Work* is a massive tome; on the contrary, it is entirely manageable and readable.

The 12 chapters commence with evolution and classification. Obviously, the latter has required much judicious pruning, but there is enough to convey some understanding of the features used to distinguish the orders and important families. A comprehensive bibliography is included at the end. Anatomy and flight have also attained chapter status, while comprehensive physiological information on, for example breathing, respiration,

feeding, nutrition and the special senses, is also provided. A discussion of migration and behaviour is virtually essential in any book of this kind, though to cover all aspects would be inappropriate. There is, however, enough to whet one's appetite and provide an introduction to these important areas. Mr Freethy has limited the use of technical language and included relevant background information which will help his audience to comprehend some of the more complicated ideas.

This is a well-illustrated little volume which certainly qualifies for inclusion in the senior section of the school library. Keen lay birdwatchers, who don't have specialized knowledge of the subjects covered, should also find it worth reading.

P J B

Jumping genes

Biology, Fifth Edition, By J W Kimball.
Addison-Wesley £14.95. 0 201 11688 X.

This popular and comprehensive American first year college text has undergone a major revision for the latest edition. There are 67 new diagrams and photographs, many in colour, while other items have been redrawn. Information has been brought right up to date, and there has been some textual reorganization. Scientific methods now have a prominent place in the introduction. Previously scattered items on cell biology and physiology have been brought together, and there is a new chapter on genetic organization, which includes

items on DNA sequencing, cloning, split and "jumping" genes, as well as a discussion of genetic engineering prospects. Two new pieces on cancer biology have been introduced and the sections on immunology, the origins of life and human neurophysiology, revised and enlarged. Redundant topics have been dropped.

This text is very comprehensive and contains a vast amount of introductory information. In this respect it goes considerably beyond A level, though it isn't geared to our syllabuses. As a school level course book, Kimball may seem excessive and slightly expensive, but as a reference book it represents excellent value.

P J B

A lively and colourful monthly
has arrived with the November
launch issue of:

BBC WILDLIFE



The monthly magazine for
everyone interested in the
World's Wildlife. Out last
Wednesday of preceding month.
£1.00 from newsagents

Introductory chapters give guidance to places where animals can be seen and on the basic characteristics of the groups to be covered. The main sections of the text are subdivided, so that, for example, butterflies and moths may be distinguished, the life cycles and feeding habits of the animals understood. Also included are hints on finding and catching insects, identifying and observing mammals and birds, migration, tracks, and modifications of birds' beaks and feet. Finally, two ecosystems, an oak tree and a woodland, are exemplified.

Mr Arnold's approach is conversational and interesting. An index is lacking, but there are a lot of good illustrations, many in colour, as well as suggestions for further reading.

Peter J Baron

notes

The Royal Photographic Society are very puzzled. Photography is clearly on the increase in schools, with a growing number of clubs and media classes. Yet nobody is entering and there was no competition. Did teachers fail to encourage pupils or was July 16 just too late for announcing the competition? The organizers are not sure, but next year they will push harder by making a bigger noise much earlier.

There are no suggestions for rhythmic percussion or drums other than the obvious implications of the Latin American styles. One solution would

Possibly you, and most certainly your pupils will, if all goes according to plan, have the gas and electricity bill for the month covered by it, an average morning's shopping conducted courtesy of it. Home security, home-based employment, home-based education will rank equal if not greater than home entertainment. And we'll be selling it abroad. The wired society is to be our major

contribution to the balance of payments and the GNP. The document, which is 18 months old, was the last word on cable from the 1977 Annan Report on The Future of Broadcasting had suggested there might be a cable network by the turn of the century, an orange document appeared. Called Report on Cable Systems, it was the product of the Cabinet Office Information Technology

Modern cable systems, based on coaxial cables or optical fibres, can provide many new telecommunication-based services to homes and businesses. The initial attraction for home subscribers would be the extra television entertainment channels. However, the main role of cable systems eventually will be the delivery of

Next week: cable television in community education.

We want children to gain
into number, not acquire a facility with
symbols that bears no relation to their
understanding. And I fear that these
workbooks will encourage the children
to do the latter.

The cassette has recordings of each item with and without the tune on one side. On the other are duet parts with drum accompaniment and the melody and duet parts of the faster numbers at a slower tempo. The number of performing permutations for one or two live instruments is thus large.

The recorded arrangements are unashamedly up to date and blatantly witty, using drum machine, electronic keyboards and synthesizer. Pupils will

Producers of a good scheme should also aim to cover a wide range of mathematics (not just number); to reassure the teacher who fears mathematics; to prevent the lazy teacher from relying solely on children

There are already schools where more than 60 per cent of pupils follow FL curricula from 11 to 16, and others where all pupils do so. These schools should serve as models for the rest: the future "statement of national policy" should include a number of case studies, showing how this provision is achieved, and how each school has succeeded in resisting the "many other pressures on curriculum time" (§27).

The Consultative Paper is also heartened on this issue, although we are told that "The position of FL in our schools is the subject of continuing contrast with most other West European countries (where) throughout secondary schooling one FL is obligatory" (§6), the case for all pupils "beginning to learn a FL is presented as if it were still one of the 'major issues of policy to be decided'" (§29). On the contrary, the "case" to be decided is whether any pupil should be offered the educational opportunities offered by learning a FL.

A FL is regarded as a "major issue of policy" is the possible postponement

3. Syllabuses and examinations. Implementation of the proposals for a common examining system at 16-plus is long overdue: criteria (based on French, but valid for other FLs) have been worked out; consortia of examining boards have been developing syllabuses and schemes of examination; many FL teachers, trained to teach practical language skills, are annually

continued

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EXTRA

Words or deeds?

continued

disincentive to find that their pupils' proficiency in these skills is seriously under-rewarded in many CSE, and in all GCE, FL examinations.

At 18-plus, reform of A level syllabuses is proceeding in piecemeal fashion: only one examining board appears to have paid attention to the report of the French 16-19 Study Group (*French 16-19: a New Perspective*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1981). "National policy" at this level should be to encourage boards to provide syllabuses that require practical language work using authentic materials, rather than examinations that reward such work.

FL provision for non-specialists, that is, the majority, in the 16-19 age range is often sketchy or non-existent: here, a national policy must be devised almost from scratch. It should include: restoration of the FL requirement for entry to higher education (abolished in 1967, at the time of our second application to join the EC); introduction of an intermediate level examination (appropriate FL syllabuses for this could be drafted almost overnight); the staged introduction of an FL component in all 16-19 education (perhaps assessed by course work assignments, rather than examination).

4. Foreign language assistants, in-

Some means must be found now, without waiting for a national policy to be formulated, of increasing the numbers of FL assistants coming to this country, in order to avoid reticulation by the French and German authorities against every prospective British assistant whose grant-paying i.e.a. does not offer places in schools in its area to FL assistants from abroad.

5. Teacher supply. On (DES) paper, the shortage of FL teachers in recent years has apparently now disappeared. "The supply of FL teachers has improved" (85). What has happened in (school) reality is that demand for FL teachers has fallen: not simply through falling rolls, but also because little by little, the place of FLs in the curriculum of school after school has been eroded. Classes are no longer given the opportunity to study the first FL for a third year, or to begin a second FL, for example. (Sometimes, it must be said, these cuts are accepted by FL teachers who feel ill-prepared to work with certain groups.)

More FL teachers must be brought into the system, not fewer, in order to restore the cuts in FL provision, and to enable the aims implied or stated in 86-7 of this Paper to become reality.

The kindest thing to do with the idea that "some teachers, who do not have a formal qualification in a FL, nevertheless know it sufficiently well to make a valuable contribution to teaching it, especially in oral and conversational work" (58) would be to forget it: it stands in flagrant contradiction to the formal and stringent demand given in 84-5 of "work of quality" in FL, and of the demands this makes of teachers. For many classes, particularly in years



More FL teachers must be brought into the system.

4-7, "oral and conversational work" is indeed neglected and kept separate from the rest of the FL courses.

The remedy for this is not, however, to hand i.e.a.s a ready-made opportunity to employ inadequately-qualified teachers (no doubt to teach lower attaining pupils), but to reform examination syllabuses so as to make such an approach counter-productive in terms of results.

The approach of this Paper to the supply of FL teachers contrasts

markedly with that adopted in *Science education in schools: a Consultative Paper* (DES/EO, June 1982), where one reads that "access to essential science subjects has been unduly restricted; and shortages have been hidden by the use of teachers inadequately qualified in these subjects. (...) the approach outlined in this paper would require many more science teachers because it would involve more pupils in, and provide more time for, science" (837).

We are in a different world: chief education officers and head teachers reading both papers may well conclude that foreign languages are to be given a low priority when essential manpower and curriculum decisions are taken.

As for FL, we are invited to look, obviously (86): "young people in other West European countries are better able to communicate in a second language than are their British counterparts", but helplessly (85): "It is unrealistic to expect that new resources will be immediately available to the schools for the improvement of FL teaching" at our partners and competitors in the EC, who are apparently able to give high priority to both science and FL teaching.

It is for the Government to answer the question which underlies the whole of the Consultative Paper: what place do we accord foreign languages in our educational priorities, and what commitment to foreign languages is the Government prepared to make, and to call on teachers, administrators, parents and voters to make?

The recently-announced Nuffield enquiry into FL must not be made an excuse for postponing still further the formulation of a national policy for FL. Such a policy, to be effective, must consist of a timetable and costed action programme, and not merely an eloquent description of low expectations and slow decline, reflecting a nation which has let itself be persuaded that enterprise is respectable only if it is private.

David Nott is Lecturer in Modern Languages at the School of Education, University College of North Wales, and is currently Chairman of the British Association for Language Teaching.

Dream into reality

Christine Wilder introduces the 1984 JCLA Course/Conference

The programme is now available for the 1984 Course/Conference organized by The Joint Council of Language Associations in conjunction with the University of Exeter at Exeter on March 24-26.

This event has now firmly established itself as the major annual forum for those interested or active in language teaching at all levels. Next year the organizers, encouraged by the success of the past two conferences, are offering for higher numbers and a broader range of interests by offering alternative activities in plenary sessions and workshops. These, together with talks arranged by the Association of Teachers of Russian, and a series of publishers' workshops by authors and users of new and established courses running throughout the three day conference, will enable participants to plan their own programme from the day or so items on offer.

The main theme will be *Communication - dream into reality*, and the key-note session Professor Ted Wigg (School of Education, University of Exeter) will examine a curriculum for the future; other speakers will address themselves to the question of how communication can be made a reality, both in a broader European context and in the ordinary British classroom where the foundations have to be laid. A forum led by no-deputy head teachers, Peter Bush (Holland Park School), Eileen Holly (Countesshorpe College, Leicester), and Barrie King, chairman of the National Association of Language Advisers will aim to air the problems and solutions of teaching foreign languages across the ability range. Further plenaries will discuss whether the second foreign language can be taught communicatively, demonstrate activi-

ties for increasing language awareness and offer practical ideas for keeping communication flowing and meaningful in the classroom.

Smaller group workshop sessions, mainly on the communication theme, will cater for a wide range of interests. Topics will include getting the best out of exchange visits, tape links, communicative testing, communication in international management and BTEC courses, devising materials for fast and slow learners, using library resources, using dictionaries, tutor training for adult education and computer workshops. Talks on literary or linguistic subjects will be given by native speakers in their own languages.

A conference such as this aims to help teachers to keep abreast of developments in all areas. This will be the first large gathering of language teachers since the publication of the DES consultative paper *Foreign Languages in the School Curriculum* and, although too late for the October deadline for response, there is no doubt that several of the issues raised for discussion will be debated and formulated into resolutions for publication. Participants will also have the opportunity to discuss new developments in A and I Level examinations and to update themselves on the current activities of the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research and the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges.

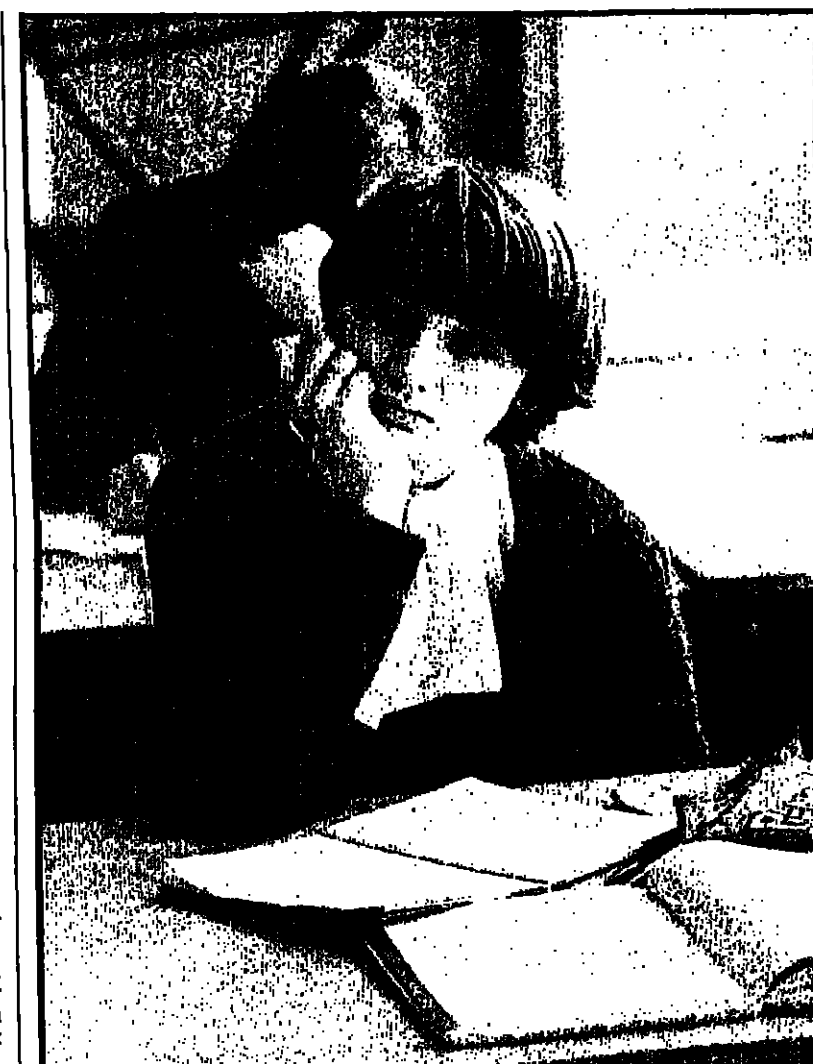
The exhibition of language teaching materials now extended over the three days will enjoy the spaciousness of a purpose-built exhibition hall and offer an opportunity to participants and the public to view a large selection of items and to talk to publishers and authors. The increased space available will enable the exhibition to enlarge its

scope to include materials for EFL, computer software, school travel firms, examination boards and any other items which might be of interest. For the first time teachers - individuals and groups are encouraged to come forward and display their own unpublished materials or graded tests: a crate of wine will be awarded to the best exhibit.

It is expected that the event will have strong support from the south west and arrangements have been made for non-residents. Resident participants will have to book for the full duration of the conference from Saturday to Monday and will be offered the option of accommodation on Friday night. Friday evening entertainment will be provided by the Exeter based theatre in education company, Bac to Bac, and workshop sessions on Saturday morning prior to the official opening will ensure that early arrivals are not left with time on their hands! The programme, however, provides for relaxation on both evenings. The guest speaker at the annual JCLA dinner will be Professor Henry Widdowson (Department of English for Speakers of Other Languages, Institute of Education, London). His presence will again open the dialogue between teachers of EFL and teachers of other languages - a step which has been welcomed by participants at recent conferences.

The organizers, aware of the disappointment experienced by many last year whose applications had to be returned through a lack of accommodation, are confident that, next year, provided bookings are received early, there will be sufficient accommodation available for all who wish to attend.

In order to encourage participation



by young teachers, it has been decided to continue the practice of waiving the course fees (but not accommodation costs) to PGCE students and teachers in their first two years of teaching who are attending their first JCLA Conference.

For conference programme and other enquiries write/phone: JCLA at

CILT, 20 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AP. (01 839 2626). For enquiries concerning commercial exhibition space only phone Barbara Brookles, Educational Publishers' Council 01-580 6321.

Christine M. Wilder is JCLA Conference Administrator

FESTIVAL OF LANGUAGES AND YOUNG LINGUISTS' COMPETITION

Introduced by Eric Brown and Martin Ash

The results of two years' discussion and planning are eagerly awaited this autumn when the first Young Linguists will be selected from the contestants entered by schools in Avon, Gloucestershire and Somerset. This will be followed in February by a festival of language-related activities and projects open to parents and the general public at which the Young Linguists will receive their awards.

This new event, which aims to raise the level of motivation in pupils learning foreign languages, and the public image of language skills: in general, owes much to the initiative taken by John Tim, Director of the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT), in drawing the attention of language associations and other bodies to a similar competition held annually in West Germany.

The German competition, sponsored by West German Industry (*Stiftung der deutschen Wirtschaft*), encourages young people to learn languages - even as an extra-curricular activity - and to build up an understanding of the socio-cultural background of the countries concerned. Contestants have to know at least two languages, though some entrants display ability in five.

In April 1982, representatives of language associations, cultural institutes, the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges, the

National Association of Language Advisers, the Schools Council, Her Majesty's Inspectorate, the Confederation of British Industry and the National Westminster Bank considered the German competition and saw it as a stimulus to devising a similar event in Britain which would not only reward individual excellence but, through the festival, involve the whole ability range.

Details of the competition and festival have been worked out by a small committee chaired by Dr Betty Farr. In spite of the problem presented by the smaller number of schools now offering two foreign languages, it was decided that (since the competition aimed to increase motivation to learn languages) the title of Linguist could not be suitably accorded to anyone knowing less than two languages. Excellence or interest in individual languages, however, will have its chance to be rewarded in the festival for which entries may be submitted by groups or individuals and may include any activity from, for example, short dramatic presentations to a display of projects arising from a school exchange visit.

The event will become national in 1984 and it is hoped it will attract entries from both the private and maintained sectors in Secondary Schools and Colleges of Further Education. Meanwhile, thanks to the interest and support of South West

members of the National Association of Language Advisers, the competition and festival are currently being piloted in Gloucestershire, Somerset and Avon.

For the pilot project, five schools in each authority have been invited to take part and round one, in which contestants had to submit two essays (one in each language) on topics of their choice followed by interviews in the foreign language on the topics, has been conducted internally in the schools. The contestants selected now go forward to the second and, in the case of the pilot, the final round, which will take place in November.

Since writing was tested in round one, the final round will principally test speaking, listening and reading skills in an inter-related situation, marks being awarded not only for accuracy of language but also for non-verbal communication, initiative and confidence in dealing with a situation in a foreign language, and in achieving the objectives of the transaction.

This obviously reflects the ethos behind language options offered by the Business Education Council - language in action, in situations which a 16-19-year-old might well be expected to come across. However, whereas BEC naturally inclines towards a business situation, the type of situation for the Young Linguist will be more

general - for example, involvement in organizing a school exchange, town twinning, or a personal visit - and, thus, it is hoped that neither an A level student nor a student continuing language studies in some other way will be deterred from competing.

Within the framework of a prescribed situation, finalists may have to telephone, understand letters, abstract information from brochures, undertake informal liaison interpreting, make small talk or even give a speech of welcome or thanks. The tests will take place over a day, though some material may be sent in advance. On this occasion, the languages entered will be French, German and Spanish but it is strongly hoped that other languages will be represented in the festival.

Naturally for this competition to be organized on a national scale, considerable financial backing is required, not only for the actual administration, but also to enable students to travel to regional centres for the competition. The pilot project has engaged Mrs Christine Wilder as the part-time co-ordinator for it was felt that the project should not be entirely dependent on the goodwill of volunteers. In spite of this, the enthusiastic support and voluntary effort of a large number of teachers and advisers will be required to ensure its success. And with its new and imaginative approach, the

competition and festival seem to have very positive support from a number of bodies who have to date promised prizes, scholarships and finance. These include National Westminster Bank, Rowntree Macintosh, The Foundation for European Language and Educational Centres in Zurich, The Commission of the European Communities, the Cultural Department of the French Embassy, the Spanish Institute, the Italian Institute, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Aston Martin Languages Club, Cambridge University Press, Macmillan, European Schoolbooks, Edward Arnold, Hodder and Stoughton Educational, George Harrap and Son and May Glasgow Publications. Any further offers of sponsorship should be addressed to Eric Brown at CILT 20, Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AP (01-839 2626).

The Festival of Languages and Young Linguists' Competition and festival, let us hope that future years will achieve for linguists and languages what similar competitions have already done in other fields. Further information about the Festival and Competition may be obtained from Eric Brown at CILT.

Martin Ash is ML Adviser for Gloucestershire.

Book review

It has no rival

A Reference Grammar of Modern French. By Ann Judge and P G Hesley. Edward Arnold £35.00. 0 7131 6285 6.

A Guide to Contemporary French Usage. By R E Batchelor and M H Offord. Cambridge University Press £4.95. 0 521 28037 0.

Studies in the Romance Verb. Edited by Nigel Vincent and Martin Harris. Croom Helm £14.95. 0 7099 2602.

L'Argumentation écrite. Expression et communication. By Henri Portlac. Hachette/Carousse. 2 01 008727 5.

Surely the biggest and most comprehensive language grammar is the best isn't too much information preferable to too little? Well, no in fact. The Judge/Hesley Reference Grammar is a superb work, authoritative, scholarly and sensitive to linguistic theory; it has no rival in English in its field; but it will provide more than just an excess of riches to the less-advanced student who merely wants to check the use of the subjunctive and is offered 25 pages on the actual reality or non-reality of events and the fine lines between the probable and the possible, the improbable and the impossible: the one

distinct probability is that he will end up understanding less than he did before and there is an actual possibility that he will be sickened by the whole business and never dare to use a subjunctive again.

This, then, is a book for the private case; access to be restricted to professors, teachers and properly accredited students who will delight in its disclosures of the more perverse refinements of French linguistic behaviour. My one complaint would be the language of its index, despite the full table of contents, which makes it more difficult to use than Grevisse's *Le Bon Usage*. In any event, the price of the Reference Grammar should ensure that it will not fall into the wrong hands and A level students may be tactfully steered towards it. Batchelor and Offord's *Guide* which will impact such

concepts as register in lay terms and lend my copy to anyone. *Studies in the Romance Verb* is obviously addressed to specialists, but some of the essays will interest teachers of French, Italian or Spanish who are not experts in linguistics (notably Christopher Lyons on French pronominal verbs and Andrew Radford on Italian exclamatives). *L'Argumentation écrite* applies to approaches to textual criticism to teaching of discursive essay-writing; by the elegance of his theory (and the realities of the classroom) teachers of French as a second language, even at quite advanced levels, will probably find little here of practical help.

Paul Carroll

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- ★ the additional light-hearted exercises prove very popular (pupils actually enjoy using the books)
- ★ and most of all — it's "a very welcome breath of freshness" (F.E.S.) to French teaching.

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Confrontation with Napoleon in a London comprehensive classroom.

Photo: Sally & Richard Green

Errare humanum est— even in a foreign language

By Peter Green

When my two-year-old daughter said, "You cut it to me, shall we?", I was delighted at her linguistic prowess and cut up the food on her plate as requested.

When a pupil in my German class says, "Gestern ich bin ins Kino gegangen", I find it difficult to get on with asking about the film until I have drawn attention to the error in word order, and there is little delight on either side.

I am well aware of the immense differences in the two situations — the relationship between the participants, the nature of what is said, the time element, and so on — but should my reactions to the two language learners really be so different?

The problem of how to react to learners' errors really starts with knowing what to treat as an error at all. An individual teacher will for the most part confidently identify errors in learners' language, but compare several individual teachers with each other and the confidence is soon dispelled, especially if some of the teachers are native speakers and others not.

In a recent joint study between Munich and York (1), 60 German pupils in their fifth year of learning English wrote replies to a letter from a supposed English penfriend. Three German teachers of English and five English teachers (three of English, one of physics and one of modern languages), independently marked and graded all the letters.

Their disagreement over errors (and grades) was remarkable: between them the eight teachers identified no less than 2,443 different "errors" in the 60 letters — or about 40 errors per letter (of average length 170 words) — but for rather more than half of the errors there was not even majority agreement. The German teachers discovered on average about 35 per cent more errors per teacher than the English teachers, but for 12 per cent of the errors they agreed on they received little or no support from their English colleagues. For example, all of the German and none of the English teachers marked the pupil wrong who wrote, "First we drove to the Bodensee".

When it came to judging the gravity of the errors, there were again differences between the native and non-native judges. The German teachers judged errors of grammar more severely, the English errors of vocabulary. Overall, the German teachers were the more severe markers.

The explanation for this common finding, that native speakers are more lenient markers than non-native (2), is probably that they approach the learners' language in the way they have been conditioned to approach any sample of their own language: they expect it to tell them something; they are therefore mainly disturbed by errors affecting meaning, but relatively few errors do (only about 10 per cent in this study).

Non-native teachers are conditioned

to approach the learners' language in the way they have usually taught it: they focus mainly on form, because communication of meaning is often simulated and secondary. Not surprisingly, they are more disturbed by errors of form and may even overlook errors of meaning.

Whatever the differences in interpretation, native and non-native teachers probably both set the foreign language learner's performance against that of an imagined native speaker. Since they are adult and academically able, the native-speaker model is also adult and academically able and performs moreover in an idealized (ie, error-free) way.

But how appropriate is such a model? Real native speakers actually performing the same task as the learners may be very different from the ideal, particularly if they match them in age, ability and social background. In the Munich-York study there were such matched native speakers: 46 English pupils of the same age as the German pupils, 23 of them in a grammar school and 23 in a secondary modern school, answered the same letter as the German pupils, only of course in their own language. The similarity of the letters of the weakest pupils on both sides was so great that when a different group of German and English teachers were asked to mark a selection of 10 letters, which were supposedly all written by German pupils but in fact included three written by English pupils, none of the teachers gave any indication of having spotted the impostors and all graded them in the middle of the range.

The reader might like to try to identify which of the sample sentences paired below were written by English pupils, those in roman or those in italic setting (answer at end of article). How is Peter and Jane? I will meet you at the Kings Cross Station.

Will you meet me at the Victoria Station? I can sail a little but not very good. I can't sail very good. When I went to stay at my Aunt's house in Easter. My time in Easter was very nice. I will coming over in July. I will arriving at 6th August. Uschi now wants to become a athlete. He had a accident.

Teacher disagreement over errors, the different reactions of natives and non-natives, and the often unrealistic expectations about learners' performance argue for a tolerant rather than a rigorous attitude to error, especially on the part of the non-native teacher. Ironically, however, it is precisely when severity is the appropriate response to error — when meaning is obscured — that the non-native teacher risks being too tolerant.

The non-native often understands what the learner is trying to say when the native might not, partly because

classroom is so contrived that meaning may actually be redundant (leading to such confusing exchanges as Teacher: Wie heisst du? Paul: Heiss! Paul. Teacher: Ich heisse Paul.)

This over-tolerance can also apply to errors of pronunciation, where learners' foreign language "dialect" which the teacher understands and perhaps out of weariness comes to accept, may actually be incomprehensible to a native speaker. The "misplaced" comprehension of the non-native teacher arises partly from knowledge of the learner's mother tongue, which a native speaker of the target language may not have.

Thus, in the Munich-York study, all the English teachers, except the modern-language teacher, who knew German, were baffled by the pupil who wrote, "Our new English teacher is strong", and recorded a severe error. The German teachers understood that the pupil was confusing English "strong" with German *stark* (strong) and recorded only a medium error.

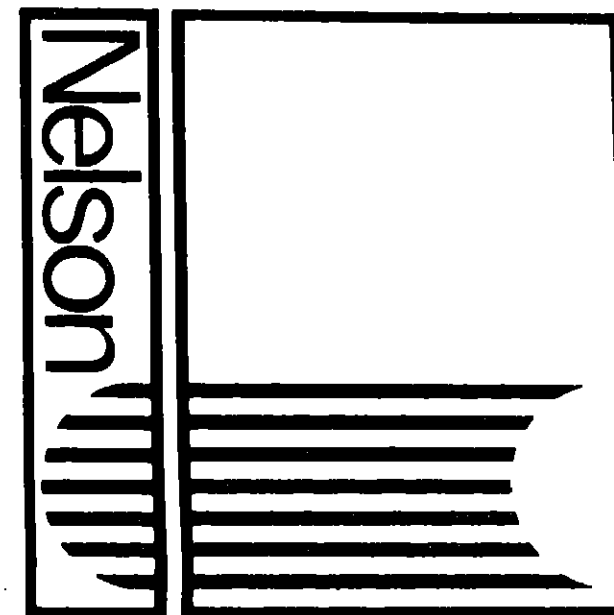
It is all very well to recommend the non-native teacher to listen for meaning like a narrative speaker and be rather tolerant towards error that does not affect it (and perhaps even to display some of the pleasure of the parent at mangled specimens of the language that actually say something, but how will the pupil ever learn the correct form, *Gestern ich bin ins Kino gegangen*, if the teacher doesn't pick up the error?

Let us assume that the simple format rule (of inversion of subject and verb when some other word of phrase opens the sentence) has already been "taught" (ie, explained and practised). The problem may not be a failure to learn the rule, because it is often sufficient for the teacher to pause, frown, make a gesture or in some other way indicate unhappiness with the sentence for the pupil to switch attention from meaning to form and correct the error without further help.

The problem is rather that the pupil has not yet learned to apply the rule while attending to meaning, and a while attending to meaning, and a correction is unlikely (as we well know from bitter experience but hold it hard to accept) to inhibit a re-occurrence of the error in spontaneous speech. With the error in spontaneous speech it may inhibit the pupil's willingness to engage in any real communication in the foreign language, and a great deal of that is needed if the pupil is to acquire a feel for correct forms by encountering them frequently in meaningful use.

(1) Karlheinz Hecht & Peter S. Green, *Fehleranalyse und Leistungsbeurteilung im Englischunterricht der Sekundarstufe I*, Verlag Ludwig, Augsburg, 1979, pp. 10-16. (2) e.g. Peter S. Green (ed.), *The Language Laboratory in School*, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1975, pp. 80-8 & p. 161.

(English pupils in the roman setting, Peter S. Green is Director of the Language Teaching Centre, University of York.



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- ☐ 2. Les deux expressions tomber dans le lac et être dans le lac veulent dire la même chose.
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Foreign languages at an Intermediate level (17-plus)

For the last four years a project at York University has been working with the language requirements of non-specialist linguists in mind.

Introduction

By Anthony Peck

Everybody knows that the Sixth Form is the crowning glory of an English School. Its pupils study more deeply and intensively than anywhere abroad; its teachers teach at what elsewhere is a University level. All would be well if the Sixth Form still consisted of a homogeneous group of potential undergraduates. It does not any longer! Unnoticed by the Examining Boards, undreamed of by the Universities, the Sixth Form has become comprehensive. Sixth Formers and their needs have changed; the provisions of the school curriculum have not. Language departments, with their need for self-justification, ignore their changing clientele at their peril.

Who are the pupils?

Two new groups of Sixth Formers can be distinguished.

● Pupils who were reasonably proficient in a foreign language up to the age of 16, and who would have been capable of continuing to study it as a major subject, but who wish to specialise in other areas, such as science.

● Pupils who have achieved perhaps only a poor-to-adequate command of a foreign language up to the age of 16,

but who, in the time of full employment, may have to spend part of their time in full-time education in order to try and improve their employment chances.

Meeting the needs

The project's first task was to define a syllabus. It has been derived from an analysis of the skills to be of practical usefulness to young people who wish to practise and improve their foreign language communicative proficiency for use in situations likely to be encountered abroad during short visits. It is also based on an analysis of how to establish and improve students' communicative base, prior to their pursuing academic objectives embodied in public examinations, commonly taken at the age of 18. The syllabus can, therefore, represent to some extent a "waystage" on the way to A level or higher grade examinations. This syllabus embodies what we call "an Intermediate Level".

The needs of the second group of pupils will be met by what we propose to call "a Pre-Intermediate Level".

A new qualification

Having developed a Defined Content Syllabus, we prepared an examination. Three generations of pupils have taken it in French, and two generations in German; all from schools attached to the project. The examination is now generally available.

Since it is likely, in the majority of cases, that students are continuing their language learning in "minority time", the limits of what they can be expected to learn, and consequently the limits of the examination's range, are clearly defined. This means that the teaching course leads towards an examination which is a test of attainment, and not one of general proficiency. This in turn means that the validity of the examination is as high as possible in terms of the content and skills taught.

In the case of the test of Extensive Listening, for instance, this is done by reserving a portion of each interview from the teaching materials to be used in the examination. The content, the variety of language, and the speakers in the examination passage are consequently identical to those provided for teaching. Candidates, however, do not know in advance from which of the interviews their examination text will come.



Materials produced by the project are proving not only relevant but enjoyable and fun to work with

In the case of intensive listening, the items recorded for the examination are re-combinations of items presented for teaching.

With intensive reading, the texts used in the examination are photographs taken at the same time that the teaching materials were prepared and resemble them in content and style.

The use of an examination for no other purpose than to place the candidates in a rank order and to measure the size of the gaps between them has been specifically rejected by the Working Party. Instead, the aim of the examination is to find out with the greatest possible fairness and objectivity, whether the candidates have learned what they have been taught. To this end, a high degree of face validity has been achieved, and considerable information about the marking schemes is given in the regulations.

Complete objectivity in assessment is impossible to achieve in an examination administered and marked by individual teachers, despite the precautions described above. A further safeguard is, however, the proposed use of an external examiner who may be a teacher from a neighbouring school preparing candidates for the same examination, or another teacher in the same department.

Certificates are awarded to successful candidates, which resemble those frequently given for graded tests. The syllabus for the examination is printed on the rear of the certificate. This examination is not a recognised qualification — yet. There is, however, nothing to prevent it being adopted by i.e.s which may thus give it a certain currency.

Teaching materials

Having designed the examination, the working party is developing teaching materials specifically geared to it, and some have already been published and are available. It will be necessary to prepare candidates with existing, or home-made teaching materials.

The material for teaching the skill of extensive listening has been spoken spontaneously by native speakers. It is guided thematically by the questions used in the interview, but it has not been rehearsed, and carries, there-

fore, all the characteristics of spontaneous speech.

We are well-used to the set book concept in the study of literature. Here, it is extended to the acquisition of the skills of extensive listening and extensive reading. Recordings, and written texts on a small number of selected themes constitute "set" texts for practising these skills. The system can be made flexible by substituting a text on one theme for a text on a different theme. The intention is, however, to maintain a standard teaching load.

The materials for practising the skills of intensive listening and intensive reading comprise short announcements which one hears and needs to understand as a traveller, and photographs of signs on public display in France and Germany.

The following three oral skills are taught, which the working party considers to be of particular usefulness. Special materials have been designed to make this teaching possible:

- Taking part in discussion
- Coping with problems which may arise when travelling abroad
- Making telephone calls of a personal and official nature

Materials for all these skills are currently being developed in both French and German.

The defined content syllabus, the regulations for the examination, and the examination papers, and the publications list are all available in a single document, available from the Language Materials Development Unit, King's Manor, York. YO1 2EP. price £3.50 + carriage.

The examination in either French or German is similarly available from the same source.

Some materials specifically designed for the Intermediate Level have been published and are available. Until the piloting and publishing programme is complete, however, it will be necessary to prepare candidates with existing, or home-made teaching materials.

A.J. Peck is Director, Language Materials Development Unit, York University.

EXTRA

A review of Intermediate level materials

French

The intermediate project was introduced in King Edward VII School, Sheffield, for those pupils who had enjoyed their French studies up to O level, but who had decided to study sciences rather than arts at A level. It was introduced as a direct result of their request to continue with French for a further year. Because of its popularity, and also because of the relevance of the materials to real life experience in France, it was decided that all French A level pupils should also be given the opportunity to use the materials, and obtain the certificate.

It is the materials which have been produced for oral and aural work which, in my opinion, will prove the most useful to both specialist and non-specialist language students. Simulations in French provide the students with the opportunity to debate a variety of issues ranging from: 'Was World, UFO's, through to Why Mary?', or arguments for and against the building of a motorway. For those students studying for A level French, we have found that the subjects have, almost miraculously, into our thematic approach to language studies. They provide the student with basic information in French about the role he is to play, the point of view he is to support, thus equipping him with a 'script', from which he can 'step' into a role, and 'act' out his part.

Many students used to say that one of the most difficult things to do was to use the telephone to speak to French people; they found the absence of visual stimuli and response disconcert-

ing when they used the telephone for the first time. Hopefully, for our students this will no longer be so, as mock telephone conversations (preferably using the school intercom) form part of the course, together with a useful list of telephone language, including how to ask for extensions, and how to tell the operator that one has been cut off.

Role plays are obviously part of the oral programme, and activities range from how to tell the doctor that you would like treatment for an excess of sun, sea and wine, while arguing with him about the advisability of being confined to your room when you have just become involved in an all-consuming holiday romance, to coping with claims at the Social Security office. Before students take the roles, they hear a recording of an English person in France, in a similar situation, which thus provides material for discussion and basic vocabulary.

Most students, particularly the non-specialist linguists, will spend considerably more time in listening to French, than in producing it themselves. As with the telephone, there will often be situations where there is an absence of vital stimuli such as announcements at airports, at railway stations, road and weather reports on the radio. Students listen to a wide variety of announcements for each situation, and are then asked to explain to a non-French-speaking English companion the relevance of the information to their situation.

Lastly, but by no means least, in the realm of listening, students have to

By Eileen Velarde

become accustomed to speech which is not "spoken literary prose", but which contains false starts, hesitations and so on, which characterize most everyday speech. A series of interviews have been recorded with a French family, living at present in England, and worksheets have been prepared, at different levels, ranging from the simple *Vrai ou Faux* response, to the *à votre avis...* and *Si vous étiez...* type of question.

It would be wrong to presume that course materials are only provided in two of the skill areas. Reading and writing are equally important, and students are confronted with a wide range of register and material. Both intensive and extensive reading are encouraged, with an interesting set of photos of warnings, advertisements, notices, etc.

It is in the field of letter-writing that most students will be involved in writing in the foreign language. With this in mind, the working party has prepared a series of letters which require a variety of different letters to be written in response, from informal thanks, congratulations or condolences, to formal requests for information, and complaints.

Having used all these materials, some more than others of course, my overwhelming impression has been that they have not only been relevant to my pupils but that they have provided fun and enjoyment for all of us.

Eileen Velarde is Head of Foreign Languages King Edward VII School, Sheffield

German

By Paul Gerrard

When the Intermediate Project working party first met in York nearly four years ago, we were sure of two things. First, that we wanted the course and the exam we were designing to be based as far as possible on genuine examples of language use, produced and checked by native speakers, and secondly, that we as a group had to agree on a list of practical skills which we, as teachers, regarded as valid, and which teenagers themselves would see as being worth acquiring. As far as materials went, we would simply have to produce our own, given that for some of the skills, for example, telephoning, little or no published material was available.

ACHTUNG! ACHTUNG! (intensive listening), and BEKANNTMACHUNG (intensive reading) clearly demonstrate our concern for authenticity and practicality. The former contains, on cassette, a series of public announcements which the visitor to Germany might be likely to hear at the airport terminal, at the railway station, in the department store etc. The announcements are in the exact form in which they would be heard, and are recorded by native speakers. A transcript is provided. BEKANNTMACHUNG is a collection of photographs of notices, posters, signs etc. reflecting commercial, cultural and political life in Germany. Each picture comes with questions. The aim of these complementary publications is to train students to listen out, and to look out for vital information which would affect them abroad.

MIT HERZLICHEN GRÜSSEN is

the core material for the single element of written work in the course, letter-writing. It consists of a collection of letters which prompt replies, organized along the lines of particular language function, eg. expressing thanks, issuing/apologizing/declining invitations and apologizing. For extra authenticity, the original letters are both hand and type-written.

Perhaps the two most original items the group has produced have been for the oral part of the course. PROBLEME HABEN WIR ALLE contains role-playing instructions for practising the strategies of negotiation, in such difficult situations as being stopped by the police for jay-walking, or for some minor traffic offence. Each situation is presented in the form of a flow chart, illustrating various alternative strategies which can be adopted by teacher or student. AM APPARAT is the equivalent booklet for the telephoning skill, and not only develops students' ability to handle "telephone" but also their ability to get their message across and achieve the purpose of their call. Both PROBLEME HABEN WIR ALLE and AM APPARAT will be published with accompanying cassettes on which model performances will have been recorded by students in pilot schools and colleges.

DEUTSCHE SIMULATIONEN is a set of six simulations, intended to develop students' ability to discuss contemporary issues in German. Each student's card contains an outline of the situation, a list of essential vocabulary

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I-level Materials

continued
bulary, phrases expressing certain functions involved in discussion, such as making a suggestion or expressing disagreement, and the student's own individual role. For example, should the new motorway be built between Erlangen and Augsburg? How would you feel about it if you were an elderly widow(er) about to be re-housed, or alternatively, if you were an inhabitant of a village where lorry traffic would, as a result, be much reduced? Most of the roles in the situations presented could be undertaken by boys or girls, and the number of roles in each situation varies between four and eight. Experience has shown that these simulation exercises provide a novel

and stimulating way of encouraging class discussion with past O level groups.
The THEMEN DER ZEIT materials were developed by a party of teachers of German who visited Münster (Westfalen) and made a series of recordings with a wide variety of local inhabitants, including housewives, teenagers, social workers and drug addicts. The materials are notable, not only for authenticity and spontaneity of the dialogue, but also for their new approach to listening comprehension. Questions, carefully graded according to difficulty, make fully authentic recordings accessible to pupils from a considerable spectrum of linguistic ability. This pedagogical grading makes it possible for teachers to lead students from listening to unrehearsed conversations, to a point

where they can, themselves, discuss the same issues, in the foreign language.

The production of self-made teaching materials, as every practising teacher knows, is enormously time-consuming. The advantages of working in a group are that each of us can specialise in the production of material for a particular skill. If any one of us is tempted to allow his, or her feet to leave the ground, the rest of the group rapidly enforces a more realistic perspective! A considerable range of authentic materials has been produced which we, as a group of working Sixth Form teachers, feel are viable. These materials are to be published by the LMDU after the piloting phase of the project.

Paul Gerrard is Sixth Form German Teacher, Pendleton College, Salford.



A group of the "new" sixth-formers - no longer a "homogeneous group of potential undergraduates". Can language departments meet their comprehensive needs?

Examining at Intermediate level

Practical aspects

By Chris Flynn

When a language teacher presents his candidates for a public examination, he is acutely aware that their success or failure depends on their ability to satisfy the rigorous criteria laid down by the Examining Board.

Prose and essay must be grammatically accurate; translation into English will be penalized; answers written and aural comprehension must be specific and relevant.

Such criteria are clearly valuable and many examiners may deem them indispensable.

For some time, however, there have been reservations about the universal appropriateness of these requirements. Indeed, the variety of language examinations and Graded Tests already reflects the differing needs and aspirations of our students. Where these are not the same, methods of assessment cannot remain unaltered.

Since the I level course is intended for post O level, non-specialist linguists whose principal concern is to improve their communicative competence, it was felt, from its very inception, that the syllabus should accommodate that concern and concentrate on practical skills. It was on this basis that the constituent elements of the course were selected, and only afterwards was the question of assessment broached.

It became immediately obvious that the excellence demanded in conventional examinations was inapplicable to I level. Successful communication is not exclusively dependent on impeccable grammar, as many stricken-but resourceful tourists can testify. An examiner, therefore, would be asked first and foremost, not to judge the correctness of what was said or written, but whether or not a native speaker would have been able to comprehend and respond to it: would the candidate elicit the necessary information, achieve the required objective, receive an appropriate reply to his letter.

Clearly there are many levels of communicative proficiency. When it is total or non-existent the examiner's task is straightforward. When it is

partial, as is most frequently the case, difficulties arise. After all, the point of breakdown may shift according to the perspicacity and disposition of the native speaker, as well as the competence of the candidate. However, the very high degree of unanimity at our moderation meetings suggests that our standards of assessment are well-standardized. Murmurs of dissent are rare.

This does not mean that the conduct of the examinations has been bereft of problems. As with most new ventures, there have been teething troubles, despite attempts to cover all eventualities. Any practising teacher will concede that the capacity for innocent disruption among examination candidates can threaten the effectiveness of the most painstaking preparation.

There are other obstacles, however. The oral sections of the exam, popularly known as "the I level grill", are the most demanding on the examiner. Since the candidates will have prepared ten role-play situations, he may be called upon to assume the mantle of a chemist, an hotel manager, a mechanic, a social security clerk and six others during the course of one day. A convincing "performance" by the examiner, in his role obviously stimulates the candidate to acquit himself well.

It was felt, therefore, that the examiner should not be distracted by the necessity to gauge the quality of the candidate at the same time. For this reason these conversations are recorded and assessed later. Ideally they should take place in a soundproof recording room.

Both the course and the examination 'strive' to be true to life. When testing the candidate's ability to make an arrangement by telephone, however, 'reality' must usually be sacrificed to practicality. Few schools are willing or able to surrender their internal telephone system for an extended period. A satisfactory alternative is for examiner and candidate to sit sideways, speaking into the same microphone but averting their eyes, so that nothing may be conveyed by facial expression or gesture. If the examiner feels that he

might yield to a gaze of sustained supplication from a floundering candidate, he could perhaps interpose a thin screen or curtain - like a priest in a confessional!

The third oral element, namely participation in a discussion is not tested at the end of the academic year. A series of discussions takes place throughout the year and the candidates are continuously assessed. In any cross-section of society it is reasonable to expect a wide range of personalities, some being forceful and vibrant, others diffident and laconic. A class of 16 to 17 year-olds usually shows this diversity. Each student will, of course, be invited to state his opinion initially, but when the debate is thrown open to the floor, so to speak, the self-confident speaker will predominate over the thoughtful but more reserved. The latter's linguistic ability is not notably superior to that of his classmates. Such a student must be marked accordingly. His taciturn friends cannot be rewarded for what they might have said, had they ventured an opinion.

Of the remaining five items examined, only the letter poses any problems for the examiner. Marking the aural and reading comprehensions is not a complicated process. The candidate's letter is a reply to a stimulus which he must respond to. The examiner must be able to detect a fractured her hip might produce a brief expression of commiseration or a wry account of how a similar accident befell the candidate's grandmother last year. Either response is acceptable provided the language is comprehensible.

The same principle governs all parts of the examination. Credit is given for accuracy and range of idiom, but any candidate who, in the examiner's view, would achieve his objective will obtain an I level pass. Many should find this a comforting thought.

Chris Flynn is head of modern languages, St Mary's Sixth Form College, Middlesbrough.

EXTRA

Intermediate level

An Adviser's View

By Roger Hullcoop

Concern has often been expressed at the comparatively low numbers of students of foreign languages in the 16 to 19 sector, and also at the large number of linguists who cease to study their languages after O level.

The need to provide an opportunity for young people to continue learning languages in the Sixth Form, while specialising in other subjects, is a pressing one, for it is in the production of scientists and economists, confident in foreign tongue, that we lag behind our overseas colleagues. The demand is there.

When talking recently to Sixth-Formers, the vast majority said that they would have liked the opportunity to continue the study of a foreign language, provided that the objectives were appropriate. Not surprisingly, they placed emphasis on relevant and practical skills. We now also have a second group of youngsters to consider. These are the students who enter the Sixth Form principally because employment opportunities are so poor. They may have an average CSE grade, or they may have come through a system of Graded Tests.

Without doubt, the Intermediate Project can offer further language learning opportunities to this wide range of students by providing practical learning objectives, suitable for those who could have coped with an A level language course, but have opted for something else, and just as validly, to those who could never have attempted A level, but who have achieved some success already, albeit at a lower level, and who wish to take a foreign language course in the Sixth Form.

The Intermediate Project caters for this wide range of students in a number of ways. The nature of the learning objectives is essentially practical, with an emphasis on oral/aural communication. The syllabus has a defined content. The stress is on fluency as well as accuracy, and students can clearly see the relevance of what they are doing. Success can be achieved at different levels. The weaker students can successfully complete the tasks, yet with a much lower level of linguistic fluency than the high flier. There is reassurance for the weaker ones knowing that they will be tested on something they have done, while most of

the topics offer the more able an opportunity to express themselves with as much breadth as they wish. The high flier is able to use his knowledge of the foreign language in essentially practical situations, offering him the opportunity to marshal a range of skills, possibly not developed explicitly at O level, and which can now be applied in a variety of contexts. Enjoyment and success are the keywords for all. In this, the Intermediate Project follows the philosophy of the Graded Tests.

An obvious benefit to Sixth Form teachers is that the department can expand its range of provision and attract into it students with whom it might otherwise not have been involved at all. The language teacher has access to a wide variety of students, scientists for example. It must be desirable for the department to extend thus its sphere of influence in the Sixth Form.

It must be good, too, when a school or college is better able to contribute to the national interest by producing more linguistically competent and motivated students, who will, in the future assume positions of importance and influence, and who may not, as a result, have the negative attitude towards languages and languages learning that many people have today.

The arrival of the Intermediate Project has forced teachers to sit up and take stock of what they are doing with their students. Those who have worked on the project have taken this opportunity, with like-minded colleagues, to take a good look at language learning in the Sixth Form. Able to forget traditional examination criteria, colleagues have concentrated on what the appropriate objectives should be, and what sort of language young people realistically need to learn.

Without doubt, this has affected the teaching of normal A level language classes, and at least one teacher admits to an increase in the amount of practical, communicative type of language used in his lessons. It is all so easy to get into a groove, where conventional objectives lead to the regular teaching of conventional language. Much modern everyday vocabulary can get overlooked (or remain undiscovered). The fresh and

essentially practical challenges of the Intermediate Project have enabled many colleagues to brush up on their knowledge of colloquial language of the 1980s.

The writing of test items and teaching materials has, I am sure, resulted in colleagues looking more critically at their existing stock, and finding new and more interesting ways of using it. One colleague has even been prompted to write a course book, and through the initial collaboration on the Intermediate Project, a group of teachers has been established, which is both willing and anxious to continue this partnership in a wider field.

There are other tangible benefits of working together on such a project, especially when the resources of the Language Materials Development Unit at York are available. It is clearly useful to come into contact with colleagues from other areas and to learn that others have similar problems to oneself. It has been both interesting and valuable to listen to the pedagogical discussion which has arisen during working party meetings, to hear the ideas which have been generated, the tolerance and sympathy which greets individual problems, and to witness the extremes of frustration and elation which accompany the challenges of difficult tasks. Essentially the story of the Intermediate Project is one of team work with a commitment to contributing, learning and sharing, and enjoying oneself en route.

For the I.e.a., it is immensely encouraging to be well represented on a body working on such an important development. The enthusiasm of working party members is contagious, and to others at local meetings, conferences are picked; interest is aroused. The first hand experiences of someone in at the beginning can be brought to the benefit of all, so that the I.e.a. area becomes more quickly aware of new developments and can identify more easily the advantages and disadvantages such a project brings. The Intermediate Project certainly takes a big stride in the right direction, and it is very exciting for Cleveland to be closely involved with it.

Roger Hullcoop is Languages Adviser for Cleveland.

Willing to speak

Christine Wilding on changing attitudes in British business

Reports from the British Overseas Trade Board, Barclays Bank International and the British Export Trade Research Organisation in 1979 delighted language teachers because they offered arguments in favour of languages from embassies and the business world overseas but they appeared to have little immediate effect on British industry and commerce.

A project carried out over the past four years at Aston University to evaluate and collate information on the use of languages in industry and commerce, now detects a change of attitude and an increase in language learning for business purposes. Many more firms and individuals are taking the wider range of courses available in both the public and private sectors. Colleges and polytechnics have responded to criticism of the rigidity of their course structure, and are now offering the same degree of speed and flexibility as private language schools - often at lower cost. Programmes range from an intensive week per month for several months, to individual tuition at times to suit the client.

Many people learning languages in mid-career have no previous knowledge of the language or are building the O levels acquired 20 years ago. They are often engaged in technical or engineering work and certainly did not expect that a language would one day be required. They are learning not only for the future but because the

owned companies in the UK, and multinational projects means the language is needed to communicate with their new colleagues and bosses. Many of them speak English but the British are becoming aware of the increased respect they receive once they show they are willing to speak another language. It is a strong psychological tool.

Teachers in this challenging field are having to acquire new skills and master the complexities of the business world. Combining ESP and recent developments in communicative teaching the best teachers now write their own course material so that the language learnt can be immediately relevant to the learner. A partnership develops between teacher and client in which both draw upon their personal areas of expertise; it is, for example, frequently the learner who can provide the specialist vocabulary.

The best results are achieved when senior management is committed to language training and the company collaborates with the teacher and supports the learner. The forthcoming conference *Getting round the language barrier*, organized by The Institute of Linguists and The British Institute of Management, will take up this point and aim to inform managers of the factors to be considered and the variety of provision for language learning now available.

* Sometimes languages affect recruit-

ment policy. A few companies teach languages to many types of employee and so consider language examination results when selecting candidates for interviews. Many firms recruit language graduates for sales and marketing but there still exists the dilemma of whether one can teach technical knowledge to the linguist or a language to the scientist. It is to be hoped that the eventual introduction of a broader sixth-form curriculum will alleviate this problem.

At school it should be made clear that languages can be used as an ancillary skill in a wide range of jobs. Teachers should ensure that students develop positive attitudes towards language learning and the ability to transfer the technique acquired in learning one language to another. There is a strong case for the study of two foreign languages and this is what the majority of employers seem to prefer when looking for personnel.

Certainly with the increasing competition for jobs a language can sometimes be the skill that finally tips the balance.

Christine Wilding is a part-time research assistant in the department of modern languages, University of Aston in Birmingham. She is also currently coordinator of The Festival of Languages and Young Linguists' Competition, and the JCLA conference and vice-chairman of the Association of Teachers of Italian.

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EXTRA

Why German?

Margaret Tumber puts the case for German as the first foreign language

This question has been put many times by parents, pupils, and colleagues. An attempt to answer it should not only serve to satisfy these enquiring, interested parties, but in touching on much wider issues in the teaching of Modern Languages might also highlight the acute relevance of the question at the present time.

In our particular case the adoption of German as the first foreign language has prompted the question and, at school level, provides the answer. The school is an 11-16 comprehensive. It is a social priority school. 67 form entry with a substantial remedial intake. Prior to 1970 French was introduced to all pupils in Year 1. The appointment of a new HOD Modern Languages in September 1970 presented the opportunity for change. The new HOD was a Germanist; of the two other members of the department only one offered both French and German while both offered German. The school had a caretaker who spoke fairly fluent German, well established links existed in the town between youth and adult groups and their counterparts in the twin town of Mönchengladbach.

Local conditions favoured the decision to make the school a "German" school. Now German is taught to all pupils in mixed ability groups up to the end of Year 3. It appears alongside beginners' French in the options. Currently some 50% of pupils in years 4 and 5 - boys and girls in fairly equal measure - continue language work in the Upper School.

The reasons outlined seek to explain the course of action taken in a particular set of circumstances. Are they merely acceptable as such or is there justification for furthering the cause of German as the first foreign language in schools which goes beyond the locally

expedient? Before embarking on a closer investigation of this point it would be as well to look at the present state of affairs with regard to foreign language learning and teaching in the UK.

French has traditionally been the first, and for the majority, the only foreign language encountered by foreign language learners in our schools. From the time of its arrival with the Normans the acquisition of French has been regarded as an accomplishment - necessary for the educated - a refinement rather than anything approaching a requirement for everyday living. More recently, as the study of Modern Languages has become more widespread in schools, French may have become less exclusive in one sense but its predominance has been revealed as a positive threat to the existence and ultimate survival of other languages in the school curriculum. A glance at publishers' catalogues reveals many more texts on offer for those concerned with French than for those interested in other languages and gives some indication of the relative ratings of the various foreign languages.

These first impressions - a result of supply and demand - are, however, backed by formidable statistics which confirm the entrenchment of French as the first foreign language. Figures quoted in Sheila Browne's address as Senior Chief Inspector to the JCLA Conference at York in March 1983 revealed that in 4,400 schools French was the first foreign language taught as opposed to 300 where German occupied this position. This discrepancy is further borne out by replies to the APU in Modern Language questionnaire of June 1983 which reportedly (David Lister TES, August 1983)

showed that out of 1,049 schools who sent in returns only 6 per cent taught German as the first foreign language.

Those working in the field of Modern Languages have reacted positively to the criticisms of language achievement in the UK and have seized upon the chance offered by the promise of exam reform to look closely at aims and objectives. The undeniable priority of place enjoyed by French and the urgent need to gain equal recognition for other languages have brought forth comment in the deliberations at all levels.

In drafting 16+ National Criteria for French, other languages were seemingly accorded equal status: "Teachers of other modern languages are invited to comment on the report of the French Subject Working Party as if it had been written for the other languages." Although the response was that the criteria could be applied to other languages (July 1982), concern about the inferior status accorded languages other than French has persisted in comment on present circumstances and in fears for the future.

Contained in the February 1983 MLA policy statement was the observation: "There is at present serious imbalance in the choice of first foreign language and we suggest that each i.e.s. be asked to guarantee a variety of choice between languages in 'area', and at the JCLA Conference in March resolutions on this very topic were put forward.

Comment on the DES consultative paper *Foreign Languages in the School Curriculum* (Nick Wood TES), suggests that such ideas are acknowledged at the highest levels where it is recognized that: "...there are 'cogent reasons' for reducing the dominant position of French" and suggested that: "...local authorities and schools combine to ensure that a variety of languages are given top priority in each area of the country."

From such pronouncements it is clear that there is no move afoot to abandon the teaching of French but rather to safeguard and foster the teaching of other foreign languages in schools. Indeed, if the argument put forward by Eric Hawkins in the 1982 'Twentyman Lecture' that "...the first language can be an excellent apprenticeship for the second" and the learning of a foreign language is regarded as the means to master the skills needed for language learning, and not only the acquisition of a new means of communication, then the question of which language should be presented first to English native speakers becomes a worthwhile issue, and the theme "Why German?" a pertinent point of investigation.

The example given above of a particular school demonstrates how prevailing circumstances were the agent of change. It is vital for the future of the curriculum in our schools to recognise that there are more general arguments to be advanced for the case of German as the first foreign language than this necessarily parochial instance might suggest. Over recent years there has been

great concern at the reduction in the numbers of students in schools, colleges and universities in the field of modern languages. Running parallel to this basic worry has been the realisation that boys were showing an even greater reluctance than girls to opt for languages. This topic was investigated at the 1983 JCLA Conference (Bob Powell: *Opting in and opting out: Girls and boys and language learning*) and the more far reaching effect of the lack of male language teachers was pin-pointed in the survey *Modern Languages and Teacher Supply* where P D Morris and A Smalley write: "A second area of difficulty is in supply teaching. This seems to be because of the undoubted fact that a large majority of Modern Language teachers are women, and the problem of supply cover for male pupils is worrying many i.e.s. advisers."

Clearly there is a need to attract more boys to the study of foreign language. German could well have a role to play here. Boys do not shy away from learning German on the grounds that it is a cissy subject. The initial attraction may be based on information drawn from comics and war stories but the subsequent willingness to continue in the subject at the option stage is equal to that of girls in our experience.

If language teaching is to take its fair share of the load in the comprehensive school then it must be able to cater not only for the needs of boys as well as girls, but also for pupils of all abilities. German, it may be argued, with all that grammar and complicated word order is too difficult a language to be taught across the whole ability range. Traditionally, it has been offered to a selected few. For the native speaker of English, though, German, in its initial stages, is joyously easy to understand. There are enough words in everyday use in German which sound (and look) like their English counterparts to allow absolute beginners of any ability level to experience immediate confidence-boosting success at their encounter with spoken and later written language.

In language learning first impressions are of the utmost importance. Before any steps forward can be made in learning the learner must be in the right frame of mind. No matter how much of the foreign language is used in the classroom, or how closely the foreign language environment is simulated, the whole business of learning to communicate in a new language, outside the surrounding where it is naturally spoken, is a huge game of make-believe. The game must be taken seriously by both learner and teacher. A simple corollary to greeting someone in German - the handshake - can from the first moment on break down barriers and represent a framework for all subsequent work in the area. If the teacher is ready to shake hands individually with each of thirty pupils on first meeting then nobody ever needs to feel embarrassed in the context of German language lessons.

The services of German language assistants who generally take their presence in a classroom seriously can be invaluable in this respect.

It has been assumed that, in line with current thinking in language teaching, listening and understanding, and speaking, will be the first two skill areas to receive attention in the classroom. With the transition from oral skills to those of writing, new problems present themselves. At this point German has distinct advantages. The transition from listening and speaking, to reading and writing is made less daunting by the secure relationship of sound to symbol.

Once the spelling rules are presented and the patterns demonstrated, reference back to well chosen examples will always furnish the required help. The need to learn to write every noun with a capital letter (and to remember to add *Umlaut* where necessary) re-emphasises, at the secondary school level the careful approach to the skill of writing first experienced at the primary school. Insistence on accuracy, where it is appropriate, is valuable training for the more able pupil, who may need to develop this skill for more advanced academic work in languages or other subject areas; and, writing a new language, in however limited a form, will give the very low ability pupil a second chance at improving the basic skill of writing.

Listening is a skill which is increasingly neglected in all areas of life today: television has taken the place of radio, pictures almost always accompany sound. German, when spoken even moderately carefully by native speakers is rarely a complete jumble of sound. Presented with the aim of developing listening skills in the classroom German can not only increase the confidence of language learners but also make a positive contribution to the development of a skill area neglected in other subject areas.

Germany as a country or as a political entity is no longer a "foreign" proposition as it once was. More people visit Germany on holidays in the UK and West Germany are both in the EEC and nowadays both "on the same side". German is becoming more and more an acceptable language for English native speakers to learn. German registered cars and HGVs are seen everywhere on our roads. Goods in supermarkets and on market stalls come from Germany - in their German wrappers and packets - instructions for electrical goods and for games and toys are in German - sometimes without English alongside. A bricklaying job in Germany advertised in a local paper asks for a basic knowledge of spoken German as a coach driver for a local firm takes a party to the Munich beer festival and needs to cope with the form-filling and the petrol regulations at the border.

The justification for increasing the number of people who have at least the basic skills in German is clear. The way to bring this about is to increase the amount of German taught in schools by increasing the number of teachers. The man is the first foreign language. The answer to the question "why German?" is simply "why not?"

Margaret A. Tumber is Head of Modern Languages, Grays School, Grays, Essex.

Berlin Hauptstadt der DDR

One of the few good things which can be said of a 31-year stint of teaching modern languages is that it has at least provided me with a worm's-eye view of a curious evolutionary process. This subject, we are told, has changed out of all recognition during the past few decades. Is this assertion true, or can we indeed remark with a nice appropriateness: "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose?"

During my own schooldays in the late 30s and early 40s French and German were still being taught on the same lines as Latin - the approach now so lightly dismissed as the old 'grammar-drill'. It would, however, be a mistake to assume that this meant dreary lessons, for the fact is that the sheer solemnity of grammatical analysis, especially when foisted on a lively class of teenage boys, tended to produce plenty of disruptive mirth. Take, for example, the ritual of reciting that silly 'football team' of pronouns: 'We soon learnt to bawl out the last two O's - so that it sounded like the bawling of an ass. I can still hear my French teacher shouting: "Forward, the donkey!" And I can still feel the sting of his cane across my left palm. He taught by direct method, but had to resort to English and the stick when things got out of hand.



But it was when we heard his command, "Lisez!" that we knew we were in for a delicious morsel of humour which I imagine few of us have tasted since. The practice of reading in chorus - so common in those days - certainly had the advantage of making sure that everybody mouthed some French, but to ask a whole class of dull boys to chant in unison was to ask for trouble. We loved it. I can still hear us yelling out those choice phrases from the course by H F Collins - "petite poire" - *petite poire* (apparently a therapeutic exercise designed to reduce the cavernous orifice of *la jeune fille à la grande bouche*). And then we would take a passage and mutter away idiotically until we came, for example, to the word 'l'album', which we sang out, loud and clear, with a dutiful stress on the second syllable. But our greatest pleasure - and something we had gradually brought to a fine art - was that we started our chorus by keeping strictly to the point of our reading, until it became an incomprehensible chaos, with each of us solemnly tolling away at our own speed, oblivious to all around us - and feigning chagrin when our poor French master tried to get us to stop.

One day H F Collins in person turned up in one of our French classes. I cannot recall whether we favoured him with a mass-murder of his text, but I will remember the deference with which he was treated by our teacher. At that time there were few courses to choose from and successful authors enjoyed almost divine status.

The text-book was our Bible, all-sufficient, and hardly ever supplemented by the teacher's own material. We were, however, encouraged to borrow adventure stories from the library, especially those little pink Oxford readers, such as *La Mission de Saint Kerrigan* by L. Boutinon. Twenty years later I tried this one on my own pupils. They found it hilarious, but it lacked the useful structures and vocabulary which helped them towards becoming fluent readers of French - something so little in evidence today.

the Third Year! The weakness in those days lay in the lack of contact with everyday life in France. French was an academic exercise, a linguistic algebra - and yet that old grammatical approach gave us a substantial foundation on which to build both the living language and an enjoyment of literature.

This approach was still in vogue in 1952, the year of my first teaching post. It was in a boys' public school where everybody took Latin, and where the standard beginners' French text-book was Nelson's *First French Course* by Ritchie and Moore. The coloured plates - which we also had enlarged as wall-charts - made everything seem incredibly old-fashioned, because the cloche hats and veteran cars reflected the period of the first edition - 1927.

Each chapter of this course was simplicity itself. First, a short passage of grammatical explanation (eg "In French, every noun is either masculine or feminine - and every thing as well as every person is spoken of as the 'he' or 'she'"). Then a short French-English vocabulary. This was followed by three types of exercises:

- "Read aloud then translate into English"
- "Translate into French" and
- "Answer in French the following questions."

Dull though this may seem, the lads seemed to enjoy it. At least you knew exactly where you were with Ritchie and Moore - a substantial diet, fed in carefully measured portions. I supplemented it, of course, in various ways. For example, I rounded off my first term by teaching them all to sing the carol *Il est né*, a practice I have maintained for thirty successive Christmases.

At my second school - a mixed grammar - I first encountered Mrs. Saxelby's curly-headed young Toto in *En Route* followed by *En Marche* and *En France*. Excellent stuff - lively and varied - but difficult for some of the grammar-school classes, and well above the heads of the same age-group in the broader ability bands of our present comprehensive. Like many grammar school teachers, I also served a long apprenticeship with the monolithic Whitmanish, whose thoroughness I found invaluable in preparing candidates to cope with prose. His *Advanced French Course* (we rarely remember his co-author C D Jukes) remained the corner-stone of my Sixth Form work for so long that I still know whole sections of the best passages and poems by heart - and some of the weak bits, too, eg "Lucy pinched my ear!"

In the sixties we adopted Nelson's *Modern Methu French Course* by Clampton and French-Loveman. Even in Book I there were optional passages of English for translation into French, but although the material looks rather stodgy there was a welcome relevance to contemporary France. We celebrated the beginning of the seventies by entering the brave new world of Audio-visual French, and made our first acquaintance with the Mersaud family. I must confess that I have never really warmed to them - not the sort of family either I or my classes would particularly want to spend a holiday with. It was so difficult to dissociate them from those petty interrogations about who was who, and who was where - and those interminable repetitions of phrases, giving the effect of parrot-fashion French.

We welcomed the tapes, which meant not only lots of authentic French, but a variety of voices. I am sure listening comprehension improved, and classes were eager enough to answer questions - though this too often be done without real understanding. Accuracy suffered so did the ability to produce French rather than merely recognize it and echo it.

In 1971 our grammar school became an 11-18 comprehensive, eventually reaching a peak of 1,800. French was gradually extended across the whole ability range - including the remedial children who had great difficulty with English. The audio-visual course, at first taught across the whole of the First Year, yielded to *Eclair* for the less able, with its snippets of everyday language - excellent in themselves, but, to my mind, all rather shapeless, with the attendant danger of a comic-cut approach, such as the pathetic

sight of whole classes blissfully reduced to colouring their work-books. Over the years, I have naturally produced my own material - including two readers and an O Level revision course - and like most of my colleagues, I have experimented with all kinds of courses and approaches. At one period I used to film the kids acting out stories, which I then showed as cassettes, after the fashion of that delightful *Monsieur Carré* series by Macmillan. I found this a useful way of preparing for the O level picture-composition. But for this kind of thing you need time - far more time than is available to the average teacher, who nowadays in any case tends to be exhausted by the insurmountable problems posed by teaching languages to the less able - particularly from the Third Year onwards. In my very last year, for example, I have taken 32 out of 40 periods, teaching every year in the school.

This matter of a work-load too great to permit experimentation and the preparation of home-made courses is one reason why early retirement is so desirable. But in some ways I shall be sorry to leave at a time when modern language teaching really is in the melting pot and the latest DES report officially acknowledges the gravity of our problems. For the truth of the matter is that when all the evolutionary adaptations have been tried - grammar-drill, direct method, audio-visual, audio-lingual, graded tests, 16+ courses like David Sprake's excellent *Communications*, for example, we must still face the fact indicated by the DES report in the understatement of the year: "Too few school leavers, especially boys, have a reasonable proficiency in a foreign language."

Why should this still be so? I believe that the reason is staring us in the face. No matter how crisp and realistic a course, no matter how energetically we work at it, the fact remains that

language teachers labour under the very burden known to their predecessors half a century ago. I refer to the sheer size of our classes - a problem for all subjects, but peculiarly so for languages. After 30-odd years I am absolutely sure of these four facts:

- The best way to learn a language is

to have one pupil surrounded by several teachers - the way we learn our mother tongue.

- The next best way is for one pupil to have one teacher.
- The next best way is to teach pupils in very small groups.
- The worst possible way is to have one teacher confronted by groups of around 30 pupils.

Learning a language is an individual, face-to-face affair. You cannot expect good results from mass-production. This, I believe, is the principal reason why the standard of language-learning (I do not say language-teaching) is so lamentably low. While classes remain as large as they were when I was at school, what else can we expect?

The other day I saw a film which showed the teaching of English in China - to a very large class of children. The teacher had them yelling out in chorus, again and again. If it had not been for the incredible motivation and strict discipline it might have been one of those lessons I knew as a boy.

This is not to say that my conclusion is that we have come full circle. Even if we have, there is no denying that we have taken on board some good things on the way - especially the universal emphasis on life in the foreign country, well supported by visits and family exchanges. But it really does seem that we have tried everything, and still not found a sure-fire method of turning out youngsters who can handle modern languages without embarrassment.

Nothing remains, perhaps, other than two radical solutions - Chinese style regimentation of our oversized classes, and the lunatic alternative of teaching languages as we teach musical instruments - in groups small enough for individual attention... What a nice ironical touch it is that the only teachers who will have the time and energy to put individual teaching into practice are those of us who are about to retire!

(Arnold Kellett retired this summer as head of modern languages at King James' School, Knaresborough.)



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EXTRA

Looking back

By Arnold Kellett

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Tu es bien là sur un trésor? s'informa le petit paysan.

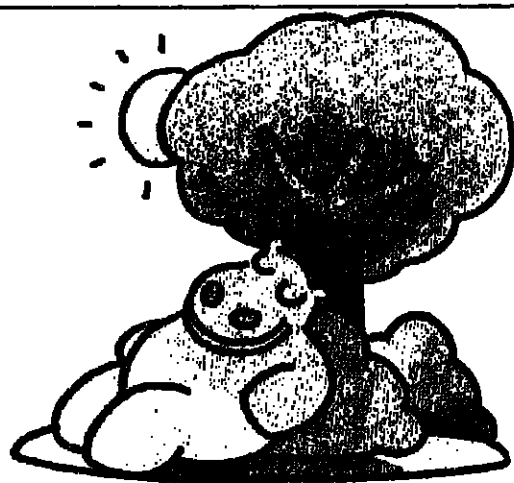
— Parfaitement! lui répondit le diabolin, je suis assis sur un trésor qui contient plus d'argent et d'or que tu n'en as jamais vu de ta vie!

— Ce trésor est dans mon champ, donc il est à moi! affirma le paysan.

— Il t'appartient si tu me donnes, pendant deux ans, la moitié de ce que produira ton champ, répondit le Diable.



et hippopotame
se repose
à l'ombre.

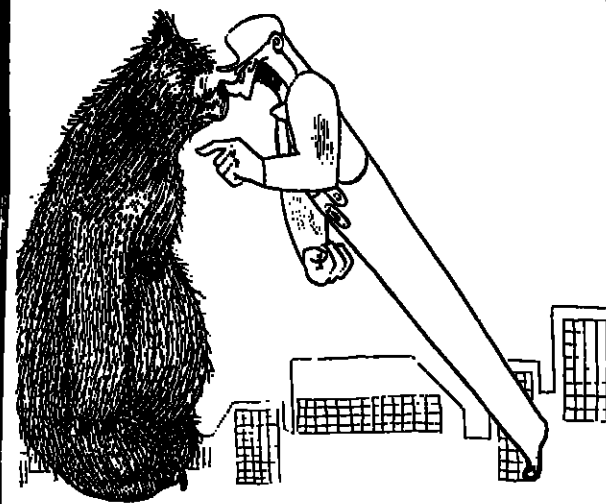


Le contremaître cessa de rire: il était furieux.

« N'essayez pas de vous payer ma tête », dit-il.

« Vous n'êtes pas un ours. Vous êtes un imbécile qui a besoin de se raser et qui porte un manteau de fourrures. Je vais vous conduire chez le chef du personnel. »

« Mais non, vous faites erreur: je suis un ours », répéta l'ours.



Top left: From "A malin, malin et demi" Grimm/Amel Guerne (Enfantimages)

Top right: From "Mais je suis un ours!" Frank Tashlin. (L'école des loisirs)

Bottom left: "Hippopotame, réveille-toi!" Altan. (L'école des loisirs).

Idiomatic episodes

Sans Blague!, La Drôle d'Equipe, Les Pique-Niqueurs, de Roussy de Sales, Ward Lock Educational, £1.50 each.

The aim of the three collections of *Pièces Comiques* is to increase the linguistic fluency and confidence of O level/CSE pupils. The plays consist of several short "scenes" — though "episodes" would be a more accurate description in relation to *La Drôle d'Equipe* and *Les Pique-Niqueurs* — for performance in class. There is a plentiful scattering of modern conversational idiom and a wide variety of characters. In the two plays just mentioned the characters recur and are in fact stereotypes — no doubt intentionally so. At the conclusion of each short scene there is a series of comprehension tests.

Sans Blague! is good fun, given considerable suspension of disbelief, but young students will enjoy the rumbustious comedy. The play calls for careful preparation and rehearsal before performance in or to a class as a not inconsiderable amount of the conversational idiom is not within the normal O level/CSE vocabulary range. The more unusual words and phrases are explained in French or translated at the foot of each page. *Sans Blague!*, consisting of two one-act and two two-act plays, is a lively creation, giving great scope for enjoyable and expressive acting. Maximum enjoyment (and linguistic profit) would be obtained if the plays were well prepared by the whole class, with the requisite small groups performing for the delectation of (and perhaps assessment by) the others.

Sadly, the promise of *Sans Blague!* is not fulfilled in the two further books. Here we are concerned with what the publishers describe as a "villainous group of friends" living together in a boarding house run by Madame Dillet. The multifarious though meandering adventures of the boarders are grouped into "scenes", many of which become wearisome not only by virtue of their implausibility but by the discursive and repetitive nature of the conversation. The author pre-emptively the behaviour of most of these characters by the puns on their names and reinforces the characterization by the stock phrases attributed to many of them. Admittedly, repetition is an accepted basis for learning, but students are likely to greet with groans rather than amusement the well-worn clichés associated with the participants. Similarly, in *Les Pique-Niqueurs* the constantly repeated self-adulation and pseudo-military commands of the retired Colonel Rataplan make for a loss of interest on the part of the reader, relieved perhaps at intervals by his amorous approaches to Madeleine Ritzzy, a naïve American guest.

It is difficult to envisage these two collections being acted, but knowledge of idiom and fluency could well be increased by their being read aloud in class, with relevant colloquialisms noted and learned. Many of the short sentences are intrinsically amusing, such as the riposte to the Colonel: "Avez-vous idées arrêtées, je ne vous vois pas dans l'avant-garde, but not so to the young reader. The teacher will hope for more plays of the standard of *Sans Blague!* A few cross occur: "on tenderloins" in the introduction to *Sans Blague!*, misprinted stage directions on page 41 in *La Drôle d'Equipe* and "Oh la la" on page 9 of *Sans Blague!*

They don't understand every word, nor can they explain every verb, but they are learning to read French like adults — a useful lesson.

Second, they get to the end of the books quickly, and a sense of accomplishment is encouraging.

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From "Les vacances du petit Nicolas" by Sempé/Goscinny (Folio Junior)

Hectic in the Black Forest

An educational holiday described by Irene Gill

Why was I, a middle-aged teacher of German, standing in my nightdress on the staircase of a German youth hostel at half-past two in the morning, trying to persuade a fat, bearded gentleman in shorts that 14-year-olds boys should not be lying in bed with 14-year-old girls?

The answer lies in the offer from the German Federal Railway which reached our school. For about £170, pupils could not only travel to the Black Forest and back, with two weeks' full board in a modern youth hostel, but also receive tuition in German and French from qualified native teachers, and enjoy a full programme of leisure activities and out-ings. Moreover, they would be members of a mixed group of teenagers from France and Germany, and would be obliged to use foreign languages in the dormitories, at table, and during the activities. The escorting teacher would be expected to teach English to German and French youngsters in small, relaxed groups for three hours a day, and would even be paid to do so. So, with 13 pupils, I went.

Safely arrived after an eventful journey lasting twenty hours, I found myself entangled into a hectic fortnight of challenging and ceaseless activity. I was a member of a small team of *Betreuer* (roughly: youth leaders) engaged by the Endres organization, which was in charge of the course. Our leader was a huge athlete with a sustainable ideal of punctuality. We were expected to get up at 7 am, get the dormitories clean and tidy, breakfast set out, consumed, cleared away and washed up, and start teaching on the dot of 8.30.

Lunch was at 11.50, followed immediately by the first of the day's staff meetings, to settle the afternoon's activities.

At 2.15 we were supposed to meet the group of children allotted to us, to hand out pocket money, describe the activities on offer (which ranged from football to making papier-mâché masks), ensure that everyone was participating in one, and be off to organize our own from 2.30 to 5 pm. After supper came the second staff meeting, followed by the evening's activities. The children were supposed to be in bed at 10 pm (even the 18-year-olds) and after lights-out at 10.30 came the third staff meeting. Accompanied by wine and beer, this generally turned into a protracted party. Since most of the other *Betreuer* were dreamy, long-haired, slightly hippy students or primary teachers, given to discussing structuralism or engaging in elaborate, zany jokes well into the small hours, our leader was frequently to be heard pleading for greater speed in stentorian tones.

The French contingent did not materialize. There was a group of butch boys and sad girls from Italy, a sprinkling of Spaniards, some 50 English, and about a hundred Germans, whose parents hoped that this course would improve their scholastic standards and their attitude to school. They certainly needed it. I had two groups to teach, one of eight, the other of four, girls and boys. Though we sat cheek by jowl at one end of a dormitory (there were no classrooms) they would whisper to each other, even pass notes, tie up their boots, or simply switch off and stare into space — anything to avoid the painful process of thinking and improving their English.

I finally won some of them round by playing popular songs on a borrowed cassette recorder and using the texts in various ways (*Down at the Tube Station at Midnight*, by The Jam, proved most fruitful), telling stories like

Frankenstein, and by a combination of half-humorous bullying and one-to-one tuition at the other end of the dormitory, crouching under a bunk-bed.

They were, in the main, victims of the much-publicized misuse in many German schools, where parents, teachers and children, the media and politicians, are all at loggerheads with each other. The German schoolchild is continually tested, and if he gets a bad average mark he has to repeat a year. I heard of one case where parents complained to the local education minister about the child's low mark in a maths test. The teacher was obliged to set another, less exacting test, on the grounds that low marks undermine a child's self-esteem.

The children often resent their teachers, who set and mark these all-important tests, and react by extreme forms of indiscipline. I know of one lesson where a late-arriving pupil sat down on the floor, surrounded by her friends, and started mending her umbrella; and of many instances where children simply ignore the teacher — who in turn ignores them. There appears to be no framework of discipline, no punishments are allowed, as these could lead to major difficulties in the school context.

Yet children are so worried about the tests that (one hears) they are not infrequently given tranquilizers by their parents to get them to sleep the night before — since the parents egg on their children as well as criticizing the teachers. The democratization of schools, which began in the late 1960s, means, among other things, that parents have a say in the running of the school, including the choice of textbooks. One social-studies text-book had to be withdrawn at parents' insistence because it contained an innocuous article by Ulrike Meinhoff,

written long before she became a terrorist.

Most of the German children on the course had failed to achieve an adequate average mark for the year, perhaps because they were not very bright, or because they were lazy, or for other reasons like school-phobia. The Endres organization was formed some ten years ago by Herr Wolfgang Endres in an attempt to ameliorate the situation by developing *Methodik* (study skills) which is taught, along with key subjects, on holiday courses like the one in which I found myself so hectically involved.

The organization is not subsidized (though the British leg of the operation clearly is) and has to pay its way, which means high fees for the German parents, over-booking, a total absence of teaching aids, and rudimentary accommodation in two hostels, ten minutes' walk apart, packed with other groups who frequently interfered with ours — and that was why I was chasing boys out of a girls' dormitory at 2 am, and arguing with the plump gentleman in charge of their group, who subscribed to an educational policy of total permissiveness and clearly considered me absurdly old-fashioned and kill-joy. I hasten to add that the Endres *Betreuer* backed me to the hilt.

Summoned before breakfast, our leader harangued the portly gentleman, referred to certain articles of the law, transferred the tempting girls to the other hostel, and also myself and my female colleague. We were replaced by two younger male *Betreuer* who were relishing the prospect of confrontation with the *Kinderhosen-Punks* (baby-pants punks).

Outside, the giant pines of the Black Forest murmured in rain and sun. My favourite afternoon activity was walking with mixed groups of youngsters, some of whom were awakened to the splendours of the sudden wide vistas of forested hills, and the stream hurrying through a narrow gorge. All of them brightened at the splendours of German ice-cream and cream cakes when we wound up in one of the cafes of the "Horizon" series, will also attend the seminar, which will be at the library in St Nicholas Way, at 8 pm.

mountain, saw the red sandstone minister of Freiburg, and the lively street-theatre groups there, the Rhine Falls, Lake Constance, and other lovely places. And there were odd and intriguing experiences, like *Auto Therapie* or *Autonomous Training* when an intense lady instructed us to "breathe into our shoulders and hips", to massage the soles of our feet affectionately, and to remember that every organ of the body is associated with an area of the foot, so that headaches, for instance, can be cured by "Acupressure" on the big toe.

All the time, the young people were getting to know each other better, and forming new friendships; inhibitions were falling, and with them the barriers between nationalities, and they were using each others' languages — often in hair-raising mixtures — because they wanted to communicate. And that was as it should be.

Seminar

Despite their reputation, must the British be bad linguists? A seminar on the teaching and learning of modern languages on November 3 at the Central Library in Sutton, Surrey, will consider this question.

It is intended as a follow-up to the BBC Horizon programme to be broadcast on Monday, *A Child's Guide to Languages*. The programme discusses in controversial fashion various methods of language learning and their validity as a successful method of teaching, making the point that two thirds of our school children give up language learning without acquiring any useful knowledge of a foreign language.

At the seminar, discussion will be led by Professor Nigel Reeves, of the University of Surrey, who is an authority on the practical application of language learning, particularly in the field of overseas trade, and an examiner for the Institute of Linguists. Mr Jon Halfreyman, producer of the "Horizon" series, will also attend the seminar, which will be at the library in St Nicholas Way, at 8 pm.

French without fears

By Harry Rée

Many a teacher of French must at some time have asked for more...

Magazines or newspapers but, having introduced them to their classes, been sadly disappointed by their response or lack of it.

Yet the intention was good and based on sound theory: English children should learn French from real French books.

About five years ago I discovered a way to achieve this aim in a south London comprehensive. A couple of dozen French children's books, lent as an experiment by the manager of the then Children's Book Centre in Kensington, were introduced to a class of pretty reluctant teenagers. They fell upon them, turned the pages, looked at the pictures, laughed, showed them to each other and started reading

intensely. These young apprentices were short and simple, and they offered to this strange new clientèle a taste of success. I was so impressed by the result that an article about it appeared in *The TES* on November 17, 1978. The article was read by a French publisher in Paris, Jean Delas of L'école des loisirs, a publishing house with an attractive children's bookshop in the Rue de Sevres. He reacted like an enlightened businessman, and arranged for an illustrated list of his books to be made available and sent out to schools in England. Three years and two more lists later, M. Delas, having gathered together a consortium of seven French publishers of children's books, and squeezed a small

selection of French children's books through Britain, through Baker Books Services in Surrey. BBS already operated a network for sending out suitable books ordered by schools and libraries; it was easily able to produce and send out a list of these French books, specially selected graded and described to teachers and librarians all over the country.

Since the first list the response has been spectacular.

One teacher compared the appearance in her classroom of the parcel of the books she had ordered to the sudden arrival of a group of cheerful attractive French children. Interest aroused, another teacher, from Scotland, has recently written:

"My only reason for not having written before... is that I have been so delighted with the books. I lend them mostly to pupils in the fourth and sixth years, for their own reading. As I had hoped, the children enjoy them enormously. I started with *Le Petit Nicolas* and *Marcelin Caillou*, and have diversified, buying mainly from your 'Fairly Difficult' section... I buy only one or two copies of any one book to maintain the library, as opposed to the classroom, feeling."

This letter confirmed my own experience when teaching, underlining the popularity of really funny books. There are, I suspect, three main reasons for the special attraction of the selected books. First, there is the success factor. Even children with only a year or two of French can grasp the gist of the text, helped by the striking illustrations.

They don't understand every word, nor can they explain every verb, but they are learning to read French like adults — a useful lesson.

Second, they get to the end of the books quickly, and a sense of accomplishment is encouraging.

Third, these are real books, not graded texts based on a word count, there are no vocabularies at the back, nor boring notes in English. When really stuck the reader has to use a dictionary — like an adult.

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Book review

Two of a kind and some tests

Edited by William Rowlinson. Oxford University Press Part 1: Teacher's Edition £3.95, 0 19 832498 7. Cassette £6.00, 0 19 840313 5. French Heats, by Duncan Sidwell and Michael Capore, Oxford Part 1: £3.95, 0 17 49096 3. Oxford Part 2: £3.95, 0 17 49096 3. Oxford Part 3: £3.95, 0 17 49096 3. Oxford Part 4: £3.95, 0 17 49096 3.

It is perhaps unfortunate that two new German courses aiming at the same potential market should be published simultaneously. The teacher of German, looking for course materials for his or her express examination class, cannot even make the cost the criterion in this case: there is little difference between the retail prices of *Kapitel* and *Deutsch Heute*. The teacher could perhaps decide between the two on the basis of whether his or her class is for two or for three years; *Kapitel* is in two stages, *Deutsch Heute* in three. There are, however, some other considerations to be taken in mind.

With his earlier French course *Tout Compris* (Oxford 1979), Bill Rowlinson successfully overcame the problem of placing his subject-matter and his approach at the correct level of sophistication for older beginners. *Kapitel* owes its success, and is based in many respects on the earlier French course. The 56 units in Book 1 are very progressive. Every fourth unit consists of grammar and vocabulary revision; the structures already used are emphasized and then further practised.

The whole approach is situational. The functional, everyday life bounds. Oral practice is encouraged by pair-work exercises; the author remains confident that this method provides maximum oral experience, although it requires very careful preparation. The progress tests with "haben" appears in Book 1 (at about the same time with "sein" in Book 1 of *Tout Compris*) to

add verisimilitude to the linguistic content at an early stage. The Teacher's Edition in both cases comprises the Pupil's Book (which costs on its own £3.50) plus teaching notes on the exploitation of the material. The excellent tape, recorded by professional German actors, consists entirely of the presentation material.

Kapitel does not commit the common error of dwelling on those aspects of grammar which, although fascinating to the linguist and necessary in the interests of completeness, do not come into the category of the everyday; thus, for example, the genitive case receives less emphasis here. As for content, it is refreshing to find material based on all German-speaking Europe, and not merely on the Federal Republic. The book is well illustrated with photographs (all depicting some aspect of the printed word) and drawings; more, these are often an integral part of an exercise, and the end result is an attractive format. The grammar summary appears in the revision units, but the book ends with a list of irregular present tense verbs and past participles and a German — English vocabulary. We can look forward to the appearance of Book 2 early in 1984.

The authors of *Deutsch Heute* have also aimed at a functional and practical approach, and have been motivated in particular by the now proliferating schemes of graded assessment which indicate a shifting the foreign language from the outset. Indeed, the language content has been based on syllabuses devised by teachers using graded texts and also on the Council of Europe threshold level. *Deutsch Heute* also succeeds in avoiding speaking down to its potential readership, who are more likely to be young adults than children.

Book 1 is in two sections: the first contains the presentations for all students, the second extension material and written exercises at basic and more advanced levels, including questions,



substitution tasks and guided free composition. The book enjoys a reasonably attractive format, although the photographs are sometimes rather incidental to the text and there is no colour work. There is a grammar summary and a German — English glossary. To be published later are tapes, flashcards, spiral masters and a teacher's resource book. Supplementary readers are promised as a feature of the second and third stages.

The language courses need to be supplemented by other materials to practise various elements of the target examination. *Freie Auswahl*, as its name suggests, consists of multiple-choice tests in reading and listening comprehension, and follows the same publisher's *Choix-Variables* by Derek Mackereth. The materials avoid monotony by including photographs, cartoons, signs, timetables, weather-charts, advertisements and short texts, each printed and recorded (the tape not having been sent for review). If the subject-matter is wide-ranging, the *Landeskunde* is not, being unfortunately limited to the BRD. A particularly useful little section is headed *Advice to the Student*, which includes the very necessary: "Do not assume the obvious answer is necessarily the correct one." The teacher's book gives the text of the taped material and, Gott sei Dank, the answers.

Michael J Smith

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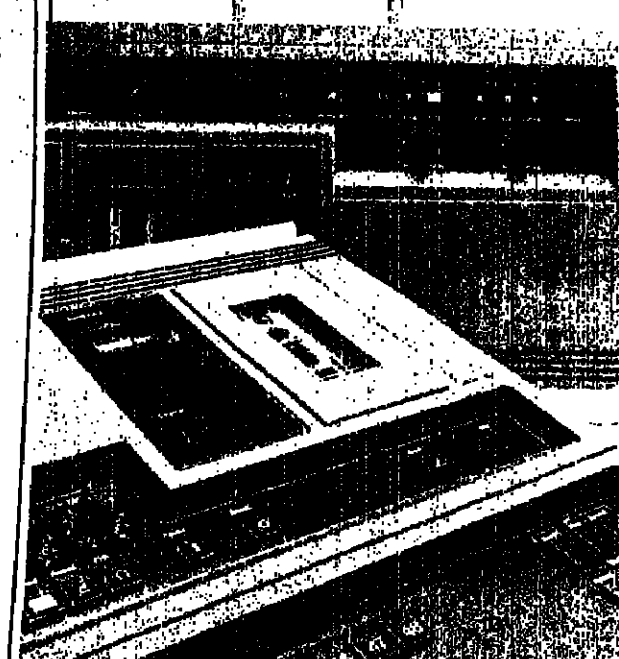
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EXTRA

Bac to Bac

A TIE company for the French class.
Review by E.J. Neather

Take a group of energetic young graduates in French, English and Drama; add the desperate wishes of sixth form teachers of French to give their pupils some real experience, in the theatre, of their A level texts; add also the possibility for pupils of French at all levels, not just sixth form, to see the language come alive by participating in a language and drama workshop - it all seems to be such an obviously successful blend of ingredients that one wonders why the Bac to Bac company, of Exeter, has not started its project a year ago, there was no such certainty of success, and the pioneering venture of a handful of talented young people had to prove itself. One year later, over 4,000 pupils from some 200 schools have experienced the excitement of actually finding Molière funny, of participating in post-performance discussions with the company or having their lower-school French lessons enlivened by a language workshop consisting of song, play and drama.

Bac to Bac have just launched the programme for their second year of existence; for the 11-16 age-group a workshop entitled "C'est à dire"; for the sixth form, a programme entitled "On frappe les trois coups" offering extracts from Molière's *Dom Juan*, Beaumarchais' *Le Barbier de Séville* and Ionesco's *Le Roi est mort*. With a minimum of props, sets and costumes the group impresses by its corporate energy, and the individual actors by their sense of commitment and the quality of their French. Their own enjoyment in acting and the fun they must have in working together on such a project come across strongly in their performances, whether in the panto of *Dom Juan*, the wit of *Le Barbier* or in the moving interpretation of Ionesco's haunting play. It is the immediacy of contact between actors and audience that is so impressive, the verve and sparkle of the individual performances and the sense of teamwork involving the five full-time members of the group.

The extracts are set in context by brief introductions, or by Brechtian placards outlining the action of the scene. As an aid to school audiences, this scenic setting could perhaps offer even more help to the spectator, and the linking between extracts given a little more polish - one thinks of a Commedia dell'Arte type figure, both part of the action and commenting on it.

The response from schools shows that Bac to Bac have fulfilled a real need. Everywhere they go they are asked to return. In December they go on tour with their production of *En attendant Godot*, beginning with a performance at the Institut Français in London. In March they perform for an audience at the JCLA conference in Exeter. One can only wish them further success in their enterprise, and some fairy godmothers among the i.e.s.s and educational trusts who will help to underpin their enthusiasm with the subsidies they need to keep going after this year.

The Bac to Bac TIE Company can be contacted at 63 Longbrook St., Exeter Devon EX4 6AS (Exeter 39008)



Bac to Bac Theatre Company in "En attendant Godot"

Book reviews

Reliable patterns

Et Voila! By Chris Johnson. Hodder and Stoughton. Pupil's Book £1.65. Book 2 £1.95. Workbook 1 £0.75. French Language Patterns. By B.J. and P.E. Goodman-Stephens. Wheaton £2.95. Basic French Vocabulary for O Level and CSE. By E.F. Ross. Amethyst Books, 11 Damask Road, Stanway, Colchester, Essex. 90p. 950876305.

Et Voila! presumes a rudimentary knowledge of French and is geared to the 12 to 14 CSE age-group. The approach is innovative and enterprising.

Each has six units, all of which begin with a novel approach to the relevant subject matter concerning the experiences of the Ragot family. The left-hand page contains a series of colourful action pictures, preceded by a concise summary of the events. The right-hand page has a corresponding number of card-shaped boxes framing

the conversation appropriate to each illustration. For conscientious pupils re-reading the conversations these boxes could no doubt be concealed. The necessary vocabulary is listed. Without translation, at the bottom of this page. The whole approach is pictorial and pupils are skilfully guided, via the drawings and questions thereon, towards amassing useful and relevant vocabulary. In yet another series of pictures a simple pattern of question and answer leads gently to an extension of conversational fluency which will assuredly instil confidence.

The grammatical structures begin with the most elementary forms of the language, and are presented in a summary or combined vocabulary lists in either of the books, but the teacher will doubtless guide the class towards profitable note-taking. More pictures exploit additional conversational structures, cleverly amalgamating these with the vocabulary already illustrated. The units conclude with short stories, again incorporating fami-

lar vocabulary, followed by comprehensive questions in English (answers in French) and useful information about France and French life, liberally interspersed with photographs. The Work Book is used in conjunction with a tape calling for answers in English related both to the course work and to conversations (again in English) with French people about their life and country.

French Language Patterns begins with a necessarily comprehensive introduction as the extension of the graphic form of language teaching will be unfamiliar to many teachers. The authors rightly call the presentation a "new concept in grammar", though the new concept is not new. It is, indeed, unlike the conventional course book which, in fact, it complements. It is a supremely intelligent and courageous approach to language learning and consolidation, the appeal of which may not be immediately apparent to teachers or pupils nurtured on "jolliter" fare. Fourth and fifth year GCSE and CSE pupils are the authors' main concern, though the book could be used with profit by younger pupils. The method involves setting out seven basic structural patterns (Who and What, Description, Where, When, How, Questions, Verbs) and subdividing these (with one exception) into a series of 'modules' exploiting all grammatical aspects of the relevant pattern.

Graphic presentation within each module demonstrates the linguistic sub-patterns, forms by illustrated exercises, testing understanding of the grammatical structure involved. By far the largest section, roughly half the book, is devoted to verb forms, which are treated in meticulous detail, with each of the modules concentrating on one person only. This alone is a novel and remarkable achievement. At the end are revision tests, a verb list and comprehensive vocabulary (with translations). The potentialities of this outstandingly enterprising work can only be grasped by the close study it deserves and which all teachers should undertake.

Successful vocabulary learning, sometimes a daunting and sterile task, is dependent on the validity of the contextual or derivative pattern adopted. This must represent a logical association of words stemming from the initial key. Vocabulary in *vacuo* is difficult to assimilate. A *Basic French Vocabulary for O Level and CSE* passes this test well, concentrating on the 2,000 words and 280 expressions most relevant to the stated examinations. The lists are carefully grouped into three graded sections, each subdivided into nouns, verbs, adjectives and other parts of speech, with the simplest words appearing in Part 1. The pattern of word association is preserved wherever possible, both in the 200 vocabulary groups and the succeeding expressions. The author has fashioned a most acceptable tool for profitable use by our pupils.

A place for Russian

Russian in Schools is published by four associations closely concerned with the teaching of Russian, this book parallels the earlier CILT publications *The Spanish Colloquium* (1979) and *Italian in Schools* (1980). It serves three useful purposes: it encourages teachers of Russian, who are inevitably isolated one from another; it provides a full survey of the present position; and it reminds those further removed from the language classroom that Russian is by no means dead.

The book, edited by J.Y. Muckle, argues for a flexible but serious place for Russian in the school timetable, giving as examples accounts of schools where Russian is taught as the first foreign language, the second foreign language, a "tea-time" option, as part of a wider Language Awareness course, and in a 16-19 college. This section, which concludes with a plea by an i.e.s.s. adviser for a place for Russian in a wider view of a "language" course, is clearly aimed at headteachers.

A short article on the nature of the Russian language (aimed perhaps at the non-Ruslist HOD?) is followed by a section for teachers, with valuable articles on available books, materials and examinations. A piece on teacher-training sits rather uneasily in this section, but makes it clear that there is no dearth of Russian teachers, merely of available posts.

Section Four deals with opportunities for pupils at school (school links and the International Schoolchildren's Russian Speaking Competition), and in higher education, and possible careers for Ruslists. The book ends with a reminder of the value - indeed the necessity - of a place for Russian, Soviet and East European Studies in our education system.

The busy reader will appreciate the short, concisely written articles from a wide range of contributors: the editor has done well to shape the material into such a readable volume. Teachers of Russian will find it both useful and encouraging. It is to be hoped that it will also be read by heads and advisers, and that they will give some thought to offering a little space in the curriculum to a subject which can open very wide windows on the world.

*Available from Dr J.Y. Muckle, School of Education, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD or from CILT, 20 Carlton House Terrace, SW1Y 5AP.

Philip Lewis Sheila Rowell

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MEDIA

Kitted out

This week the BBC launched three major new microelectronics series, two of them for junior schools. Gillian Macdonald reports on an impressive venture to prepare young schoolchildren for the new careers of the future.

Microelectronics could be the future, according to Richard Fothergill, Director of the Microelectronics Education Programme. Mr Fothergill was speaking at last Thursday's BBC launch of three new microelectronics radio series designed to prepare schoolchildren for the new technology.

The package of three series with accompanying kits and software was an impressive display of pulled resources. Not only has the BBC collaborated with MEP and the Department of Industry (providers of important subsidies), but through MEP a number of small firms and individuals have been able to develop and sell their products.

Using Your Computer, aimed at 9 to 12-year-olds, begins on November 1. It offers a new dimension in educational broadcasting in which radio broadcasts are synchronized with computer software. The tape on your computer-compatible cassette recorder provides the software, while the taped broadcast on a second recorder instructs the children when to press what keys on the computer keyboard. Transmission of software over the air is technically possible, but the BBC is not likely to attempt it until next year. In the

launching his department's autumn schedule last month, Edward Barnes, BBC Television's Head of Children's Programmes, said they were going to be "concentrating on laughs" (a remark which led Radio 4's *Week Ending* to ask whether BBC Light Entertainment programmes were to become correspondingly more childish).

A glance at the publicity bears him out. *Reinaghast*, inexplicably children's television's longest running situation comedy, begins its ninth series this month. Early in the new year Clive Dunn returns with another series of *Grandad*. But spearheading the new season's comedy output are two new sitcoms, *Wooler and Seaview*. The former (which begins transmission in mid-November) is based on the life of the dog-warden of Kidbury District Council, while *Seaview* "takes a humorous look at the domestic struggle" which a Blackpool guest-house, so much for the commercial. Tucked away towards the end of Edward Barnes' remarks was a little note about drama, the home-produced children's drama series which accounts for about 15.5 million of his budget every year. (His department's overall £9 million is split roughly 50-50 between "original" - making new programmes - and the cost of repeats and buy-ins.) No, Barnes said, it had not been out of the question for the quest for laughs. The autumn would see "a full programme of drama". *Grange Hill* was coming back, so was *Tucker's Luck*. There were also to be two classic series, one was the most expensive of his "originals", the other a repeat. Not a lot to shout about, perhaps, but quite enough to talk about.

And Edward Barnes is used to talking. His time as Head of Children's Programmes has coincided almost exactly with the run of *Grange Hill*. He didn't start it but over the years he has become very used to defending the series, defying the attacks of parents, teachers and the popular press. After six seasons, he says, he is still firmly committed to it. Like every other hardy regular it has had its ups and downs, he admits; some episodes

have been weaker than others - no, he won't be drawn into particulars there - but he believes there is still a lot of life left in the idea yet.

The last series, to be repeated at the end of this year as a curtain-raiser to the new, was dominated by the theme of racial tension. Harsh words were spoken in the classrooms and corridors - equally harsh criticism came the way of Edward Barnes. "It's always the same," he says, "but I must admit I think *Grange Hill* is at its best when it's dealing with something concrete like that. Otherwise you're in danger of doing a sort of modernized Billy Bunter."

And he stresses that nothing in *Grange Hill* is done without the fullest possible consultation. Teachers, local education authorities and - for the last series - immigrant leaders were all involved in the planning stages. "I honestly do think - we are very responsible about *Grange Hill*. Last year I went through cutting out all the derogatory remarks, 'wogs', that sort of thing. We only put them back when immigrants themselves said No, if you're going to do it, do it properly. Kids do use those words, leave them in."

Much the same criteria underlie

ETV Science Topics BBC2, Tuesdays 1.19.
The catalytic action of manganese dioxide on hydrogen peroxide is a practical exercise found in most school chemistry courses. It is simple to do, cheap, always works and is safe. Perhaps these are the reasons why it is done, but the link between the investigation and everyday life is rarely considered.
If pupils watch "Catalysis", one of the programmes in the latest BBC series of *Science Topics* for 14 to 17-year-olds, the link becomes clear. Catalysis is shown to play a part in processes as different as fertilizer manufacture and cheese making. How they work, and particularly the ideas of enzymes, is explained in straightforward language supported by animation. The manufacture of metal-impre-

Heady stuff

In the first of two articles on the new season of children's television, Hugh David focuses on BBC's drama output.

Heady stuff, but understandably as far as the BBC is prepared to go. Edward Barnes is unrepentant. "I'd hate to think we were just going for 'meaningful' social drama," he says. "Social realism is all very well, and we've acquired a sort of reputation for it from *Grange Hill* - falsely, in my opinion - but there's a lot more to drama than that."

He points to those two classic serials, *Moonfleet* is currently in production for transmission in early 1984. The dramatization of Nina Bawden's *Carrie's War* was originally seen in 1974 and is being repeated as a result of an agreement reached by the BBC with Equity for 'but once' repeats of television drama. Both are examples of the sort of thing which everyone says the BBC has always done best. But to Edward Barnes they represent something altogether more important. They are tokens of his commitment to the idea that drama is "absolutely essential" on children's television.

Drama is part of education, he believes. "It extends our knowledge of our own emotions in a way that nothing else can. And I mean drama in its widest sense. *Tucker's Luck* is contemporary and 'relevant' but in terms of self-knowledge it's no better than *Corrie's War*. It's all vital. Of course we've got to carry on doing it."

Next week Hugh David looks at ITV.



Todd Carlyle in "Tucker's Luck" - a modern James Dean?

Tucker's Luck, the *Grange Hill* spin-off which started earlier this year. Although not strictly speaking for children, the series still has no-go areas. Todd Carlyle, the young actor who plays the listless, unemployed Tucker, has a curious personal magnetism and a substantial following. Edward Barnes realizes this (though his suggestion that Carlyle is "a sort of modern James Dean" perhaps makes rather too much of it) and he will not have Todd/Tucker directly involved in anything like glue-sniffing. He doesn't even smoke. "We can't afford to take that risk - besides, I don't think the audience really wants it," he says.

That audience is a very specific one. *Tucker's Luck* does not appeal to the same viewers as *Grange Hill* and was never intended to. It was directly aimed at the middle-to-late teenager who, television companies discovered a year or two ago, did watch television after all. "Todd brought a lot of the younger *Grange Hill* viewers over to *Tucker* when it first started," Edward Barnes remembers, "but they didn't stay."

Very much by design, *Tucker's Luck* goes out in what Barnes is happy to call "adolescent's hour" - on BBC2 in the early evening, thus neatly dividing it off from the likes of *Grandad* and

and Anthony Lucas of MEP in Newcastle. The computer screens were devised by Harlequin Design, two housewives in a Newcastle suburb. The circuit board for *Junior Electronics* was designed by Educational Electronics, a small firm in Leighton Buzzard. The kit of parts for *Microtechnology* came from Science and Technology Education Merseyside in Liverpool. The power unit supply was designed and manufactured by PMF Design and Developments, a husband and wife working in Essex. The computer software will be produced by King Alfred's College, Winchester.

These are the careers of the future, said Richard Fothergill, so "it is important that kits are available to schools to stir up the curriculum. And it is important that two of these series are junior electronics. We are interested to find out with this pack how much juniors can cope with."

The software cassettes for *Using Your Computer* are available for the BBC Micro Model B, Sinclair Spectrum 48K and Link 480Z from BBC Publications, 35 Marylebone High St, London W1M 4AA, price £7.00 (excluding VAT and postage). Details of other resources from Microtechnology, BBC School Radio, 3 Portland Place, London W1A 1AA.

Reinaghast on BBC1 an hour or so earlier. The slot allows more freedom, but not as much as might be imagined. Forget about the "toddler's truce" and the television companies' other strategies for getting "adult" material on to the screen. There is evidence to suggest that *Reinaghast* audience itself is looking for anything but explicit sex and violence. Edward Barnes believes this is because they are very conscious of their parents and their own position in the family home.

All the same *Tucker's Luck* can hardly be accused of ducking contentious issues. The first series tackled unemployment head on with scenes actually shot in Job Centres. There was also a running feud with Tucker's enemy, the suburban wide-boy Pussmore, which not infrequently erupted into violence and a refreshingly unromantic love interest.

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Next week Hugh David looks at ITV.

briefings
radio & tv

For schools

HIGHER EDUCATION

(Monday 9.10 BBC2)
A series of programmes for those hoping to go on to university or polytechnic courses. This week students get an idea of the choices open to them and the necessity for choosing carefully. Advice is given on ways of deciding which course to follow and which establishment to choose.

THE ENGLISH PROGRAMME

(Monday 10.31, Wednesday 10.21, ITV)
The unit on set books begins with two programmes about "To Kill a Mocking Bird". The first film concentrates on Harper Lee's home town in the 1930s, the Depression and its local effects and relations between black and white.

ZIG ZAG (Monday 11.00; Wednesday 14.40, BBC2)
How is evidence collected? How can it be interpreted? How can it be recorded? Eight and nine-year-olds begin a unit on detection by looking at an episode in medical history when Sir John Snow found out why people were dying of cholera in Victorian London.

MODERN STUDIES:

POLITICS IN ACTION (Monday 13.38, BBC2)
Five case studies provide resource material to help develop political literacy in 14 to 17-year-olds. Unfortunately only broadcast in Scotland.

GENERAL STUDIES

(Monday-Friday 00.30, VHF 4) A series for use with general sixth forms includes a unit on "Making sense of British industry" and five programmes studying the major influences on young people today, the press, television and radio, advertising and the world of pop.

HISTORY: NOT SO LONG AGO

(Tuesday 14.20, VHF4)
"The Great War" is a set of new programmes for 9 to 12-year-olds beginning with a radiovision presentation of a wide range of events from the First World War. Subsequent programmes examine what life was like for the soldier, the sailor, the airman and the nurse.

INTRODUCING SCIENCE EXTRA

(Tuesday 14.20, VHF4)
"Using Your Computer" is a short series for use with 9 to 12-year-olds. Programme one is an introduction for teachers and the others are accompanied by computer software available from BBC Publications. These computers concentrated on are: BBC Model B, Sinclair Spectrum 48K and Link 480Z

SCIENCE

(Thursday 10.34, Friday 14.01, BBC2)
A documentary looking at the making of a new television commercial for Tizer. Fourteen to 16-year-olds investigate the ways manufacturers and advertisers get at their target audience.

MAKING A LIVING

(Friday 10.43, ITV)
"Getting off to a good start" gives young people advice on trade unions; why it's important to join and what practical advantages there are.

COMPUTERS IN THE REAL WORLD

(Friday 10.45, VHF4)
Another series of computer programmes, this time for 14 to 16-year-olds. The four radiovision programmes are preceded by an introductory session for teachers and show the practical applications of computers.

Jackie Hardie

Catalyst topics

should be a useful teaching point for teachers.

"Genetics and Genetic Engineering" begins by looking at similarities and differences among humans (an interesting selection of racial types sitting in a very English park) and goes on to explain the mechanism of inheritance. Flower colour in peas is the tangle. The massive dilemmas faced by scientists and the decisions that must be made in the development and application of their work. Obviously these programmes should be followed by classroom discussion for which teachers must be well-informed. It is regrettable that the "Science Catalogue" accompanying the series does not give them any support in this.

The chemical engineer at the nitrate fertilizer plant and the mechanic testing exhaust fumes are both women, whereas the biologist in Genetics and Genetic Engineering are both men. This reversal of the accepted roles

neither are those of genetic engineering.

It is the beneficial side that is emphasized. In the "engineering" section we are shown how human chromosome bits can be inserted into those of bacteria to manufacture human products. The example quoted is Factor VIII which is needed to alleviate the suffering of haemophiliacs.

Science Topics brings the modern world of science and technology into the classroom, but it does not communicate the massive dilemmas faced by scientists and the decisions that must be made in the development and application of their work. Obviously these programmes should be followed by classroom discussion for which teachers must be well-informed. It is regrettable that the "Science Catalogue" accompanying the series does not give them any support in this.

Jackie Hardie

Education Youth Service

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the following 5 posts currently available within this dynamic youth service.

Senior Youth Worker Biggleswade Youth Club

This post is in purpose-built accommodation on the campus of a middle school serving part of east Bedfordshire. An interest in rural youth work and outdoor education would be an asset.

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This post is in purpose-built accommodation on the campus of a community college and serves the whole of that part of Bedfordshire. An interest in outdoor education and work with girls would be an asset.

Senior Youth Worker

This post has overall responsibility for the general direction, policy, programme and staff management of two full-time Youth Centres and a number of part-time Youth Centres in East Luton.

The salary for the above 3 posts is JNC Range 3, points 4-8, £18,78-£21,183 pa.

Youth Worker

This post has responsibility for the leadership of the Club meeting in purpose built accommodation on the campus of a high school.

Youth Worker

This post has responsibility for the evening leadership of the town centre youth club, which also provides a daytime project for the Young Unemployed. The post also carries staff development responsibilities for all staff at Youth House.

The salary for the above two posts is JNC Scale 2 £6,048-£7,710 pa.

The Authority provides comprehensive induction, appropriate in-service training and continuous support to staff. Assistance may be given towards removal expenses, estate agents fees and lodging allowances in approved cases.

Application forms and full details may be obtained from the Chief Education Officer, County Hall, Bedford, Bedfordshire. Telephone enquiries to Mrs E. Goodwin, Bedford 63222 Ext. 359.

Application forms should be returned by 14th November, 1983.

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A suitably qualified Youth and Community Worker or Teacher is required to assist in identifying the needs of young people on the Brighthelm Estate, Slough and to organise resources in a way likely to meet those needs. Applicants should have experience of club based work and the ability to work as part of a team. He/she should have a definite commitment to working with young people and competence in sporting and outdoor activities, together with an awareness of group dynamics and experience of working with groups. Candidates should also have some administrative skills and possess a current driving licence.

POST B) £8,306-£27,988

A qualified Youth and Community Worker or Teacher is required to assist in identifying the needs of young people on the Brighthelm Estate, Slough and to organise resources in a way likely to meet those needs. Applicants should have experience of club based work and the ability to work as part of a team. He/she should have a definite commitment to working with young people and competence in sporting and outdoor activities, together with an awareness of group dynamics and experience of working with groups. Candidates should also have some administrative skills and possess a current driving licence.

Both posts will receive comprehensive in-service training and personal supervision. Removal expenses in approved cases. Further information from Mrs R. Shepherd - Tel. Slough 875444 or in respect of post a) Mr John Ainsley - Tel. Slough 78138. Or in respect of post b) Mr Malcolm Ponnay - Tel. Slough 875444.

Application forms and detailed job specifications from Director of Education (YCS), Slough Hall, Slough Park, Reading, Berkshire RG2 3XZ (S.A.E. please). Closing date for both posts November 11th, 1983. Berkshire County Council is an equal opportunity employer and all applicants will be considered solely on the basis of suitability for the post irrespective of race, colour, sex, marital status or disability.

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY continued

LONDON CO-ORDINATION/PROJECT MANAGER

The Youth Work Centre is an independent voluntary organisation. The bulk of its funds from the Manpower Services Commission and the London Borough of Haringey.

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The Project Manager will be responsible for the general management of the project which employs a staff, and will report to the Agency Management Committee. The successful applicant will have to demonstrate sound administrative and financial skills, as well as show a commitment to the Youth Work Centre's aims and objectives. The Youth Work Centre is an equal opportunity employer.

Salary: £21,000-£25,000 per annum. Please contact: Barbara Pater, Tel. 01-531 44000. Closing date: 15th November 1983. (69133) 40000

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FINLAND. Language schools in Helsinki and Tampere seek experienced and qualified English teachers. One year's teaching experience essential. B.A. and T.E.L. preferred. Start in January. Return journey paid. Further information and applications: IWO (International Workers' Organisation), 28 A, Millington Road, London W14 9JF. Tel: 01-531 23519. (69133) 40000

GREECE. Schools on the Greek Islands seek English teachers. Good salary, no tax, excellent conditions. For details of how to contact employers and cost, write to: Cyprus Education Board, P.O. Box 371, Nicosia, 18557.

GREECE. TEACHERS IN GREECE. English teachers required for the new schools to be built in the new towns. Good pay, no tax, excellent conditions. For details of how to contact employers and cost, write to: Cyprus Education Board, P.O. Box 371, Nicosia, 18557.

ITALY. International School of Milan requires for January 1984 a teacher of Mathematics to level with Computer Studies to level with Mathematics. Details and application forms obtainable from: International School of Milan, 20123, S.E.W. (58889) 40000

ITALY. Exp. E.S.L. teacher mainly for children, required urgently. C.V. & photo, please to: English House, 181781 40000

JAPAN. EFL INSTRUCTORS. Language school EFL Tokyo area is recruiting EFL instructors. An 18 month contract is offered. Commencing in 1984. Applicants should be fully qualified with a minimum of 5 years TEFL experience. Knowledge of Japanese an advantage. Salary: ¥1,500,000 per annum. ¥150,000 bonus at completion of contract and four weeks holiday. Interviews will be held in London in December. Apply to: Japanese Language School, 181781 40000

KENYA. Teacher of P.E. and English required for January 1984 for a new school. Interest or experience of Remedial Education an advantage. Apply by letter, including Headmaster's reference to the Headmaster, P.O. Box 48918, Nairobi, Kenya. (58252) 40000

KUWAIT. DEVELOPING ENGLISH SCHOOL. G.C.E. vacancy for teacher of English. With experience of teaching English. Salary: £12,000 per annum. Full details and application forms obtainable from: The English School, P.O. Box 48918, Nairobi, Kenya. (58252) 40000

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RECREATION CO-ORDINATOR. £19,000. We require an active individual to co-ordinate sports, including swimming and various recreational activities for up to 1,000 students. The successful candidate will be around 30 years old, have a degree in physical education or recreation with 3-5 years experience in a similar environment. Middle East experience not essential.

CHIEF INSTRUCTOR. £19,000. Responsible for supervising Middle East instructors who will be conducting courses for air conditioning Repair Men and light industrial Electricity. A minimum this position requires C&G and 5 years experience in a vocational education environment.

Send full CV to: GILDED EGYPT PROJECT, 105 Oxford Road, Reading, Berks RG1 2UD. Tel: 0734 591916 (692) 40000

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MALAWI

Needed urgently, qualified teachers to teach English and Physical Education to 'C' level in Catholic and Protestant schools. These challenging posts on a 3 year contract terms. Must be O.E. citizens. Interview essential. For details please send c.v. and references to: THE CENTRE FOR BRITISH TEACHERS LIMITED, 15 TOTTENHAM STREET, LONDON SW1T 3QT. 460000

OVERSEAS TEACHER CHANGE (EUROPE). Currently employed teachers in Europe are invited to apply for a post in Malawi. The Centre for British Teachers Limited, 15 Tottenham Street, London SW1T 3QT. 460000

SAUDI ARABIA. Teaching couple with children and husband. Graduate experience in UK. Experience in CAL, own P.C. and access to a car. Salary £12,000 per annum. For details please send c.v. and references to: THE CENTRE FOR BRITISH TEACHERS LIMITED, 15 TOTTENHAM STREET, LONDON SW1T 3QT. 460000

TEACH EFL IN MALAYSIA FOR A YEAR OR TWO. More than 200 Centre teachers have been employed in Malaysia since 1970, and we are now offering contracts for a further 50 teachers for EFL for one or two years from January 1984.

One Year Contracts. These posts are ideal for younger EFL teachers, either taking up their first post abroad or moving to South East Asia for the first time. You will be replacing Centre teachers leaving Malaysia after teaching for two years in Lower Secondary Schools, so you will receive first hand information of living and working in specific postings. You will be taking 18-19 year old students up to the final year of examination (the Lower Certificate of Education - SRF).

Two Year Contracts. These contracts are available as part of the new project to improve the standard of English of Malaysian students who have already obtained places at Universities in English speaking countries. Students will be 18-21 years old and highly motivated. These posts are suitable for EFL teachers with overseas experience, who are adaptable and able to work in a team.

Conditions of Service. Good salaries and allowances, no tax, free housing, free medical and dental services, excellent professional and welfare support.

Qualifications. Applicants, who must be at least 21 years old, must have: * A University degree * A Postgraduate Certificate in Education * A minimum of 3 years TEFL or total of 5 years teaching of which 2 must be in TEFL

For further information and application form, please contact: The Centre for British Teachers Limited (TLMA), Quality House, Quality Court, Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1HP. Tel: 01-242 2882

Please state whether you are interested in a one or two year contract.

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OVERSEAS

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